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DIE TAHEB-VORSTELLUNG ALS POLITISCHE UTOPIE*

FERDINAND DEXINGER

A) *Die Samaritaner*

Die samaritanische Gemeinde zählt heute in den beiden Zentren Nablus (Sichem) und Holon (Tel Aviv) zusammen etwa 500 Seelen. Mittelpunkt für die Samaritaner ist jedoch nicht Jerusalem, sondern der heilige Berg Garizim.

Die Samaritaner verehren den Gott Israels, wie er sich in den fünf Büchern des Mose offenbart. Sie stimmen in den religionsgesetzlichen Bestimmungen, wie sie sich aus den Pentateuch ergeben, mit den Juden überein, haben jedoch im Unterschied zu Juden und Christen keine anderen heiligen Schriften als eben die Torah des Mose. Sowohl für das rabbinische Judentum, wie auch für die moderne kritische Forschung stellt sich vor allem die Frage nach dem Ursprung der Samaritaner. Durch die Klärung dieses Ursprungs ist auch erst eine religionsgeschichtliche Einordnung dieser Gruppe möglich.

Die traditionelle Sicht in der rabbinischen Literatur (vgl. BerR 94,7) bringt den Ursprung und die Eigenart der Samaritaner tendentiös bzw. irrtümlich mit IIReg 17,24-41 in Verbindung. Demnach wären die Samaritaner die Nachfahren halbbekehrter, aus Kutha stammender heidnischer Kolonisten, die nach der Zerstörung des Nordreiches 722 v.Chr. in Samaria angesiedelt wurden. Diese Auslegung von IIReg 17 begegnet erstmals bei Josephus Flavius (Ant IX,14,3 §§288-291) und muß als das Ergebnis antisamaritanischer, rabbinischer Polemik angesehen werden. So heißen die Samaritaner im rabbinischen Schrifttum "Kuthäer". Nach rabbinischer Halacha gelten die Samaritaner somit nicht als Juden. Im Staat Israel jedoch gilt auf Initiative von I. Ben-Zvi für die Samaritaner seit 1949 das Rückkehr-Gesetz.¹ Damit werden in Israel die Samaritaner im staatlichen Bereich wie Juden behandelt. Das war vor allem in der Zeit vor 1967 wichtig, wenn ein Samaritaner von Nablus nach Holon zog und so in Israel einwanderte. Die

Samaritaner selbst verstehen sich jedoch als das eigentliche Israel und die rechten Beobachter der Torah des Mose, zu der sich in der Endzeit auch die Juden bekehren werden.

Zum Ursprung der Samaritaner läßt sich Folgendes sagen. Die Analyse der Textform des Samaritanischen Pentateuchs (= SP) läßt zusammen mit den in Qumran gefundenen Bibelfragmenten und unter Berücksichtigung der charakteristischen samaritanischen Buchstabenform erkennen, daß der SP im Prinzip eine originale Textgestalt aus dem 2. Jh. v. Chr. bietet. Demnach sind die Samaritaner in der hasmonäischen Zeit als selbständige religiöse Gruppe aus den in und um Sichem lebenden Juden hervorgegangen. Neben dem aus dieser Zeit stammenden gemein-jüdischen Erbe haben die Samaritaner eine Sonderentwicklung durchgemacht, die jedoch ihre prinzipielle Zugehörigkeit zum Bereich der jüdischen Religion nicht verdeckt. Im Unterschied zum rabbinischen Judentum haben sie weder Mischna noch Talmud entwickelt, sondern beziehen sich in ihrer religionsgesetzlichen Praxis ausschließlich auf den Pentateuch.

Wenn auch, wohl seit der Zerstörung ihres Heiligtums auf dem Garizim durch Johannes Hyrkanus (129 v. Chr.), kein eigentlicher Opferkult mehr besteht, kommt den Priestern (seit 1624 nur mehr Leviten) eine führende Stellung zu. Gegenwärtig (1989) hat Joseph ben Ab Hisda die Hohepriesterwürde inne. Wenn die Zahl der lebenden Samaritaner auch gering ist, so sind sie, religionsgeschichtlich gesehen, wertvolle Zeugen für das vielgestaltige Judentum des 2./1. Jh. v. Chr.

B) Vorbemerkungen zum Thema

Die Zukunftsgestalt der Samaritaner, kann man nur im weiteren Sinn als "Messias" bezeichnen. Die Samaritaner legitimieren diese ihre Vorstellung exegetisch mit dem Bezug auf Dtn 18,15.18. Zutreffend daran ist, daß die Taheb-Gestalt zum allgemein jüdischen Typus des Propheten, näherhin des endzeitlichen Propheten, zu rechnen ist. Dem entspricht auch die schon gemeinjüdisch belegte eschatologische Deutung von Dtn 18,15.18. Die Taheb-Gestalt wurzelt nicht in der Erwartung eines zukünftigen Königs.

Vorwegnehmend kann festgestellt werden, daß es weitgehende

Parallelen zur Messiasvorstellung gibt. Daneben sind jedoch Spezifika zu registrieren, die wie mir scheint, nicht ohne Bedeutung für die Erhellung des gegenseitigen Verhältnisses von Religion und Gesellschaft sind.

Der erste Satz der Einleitung zu KIPPENBERG's Religion und Klassenbildung² regt dazu an, die gesellschaftlichen Zielvorstellungen deutlich zu machen, die in den Texten mit dem Auftreten des Taheb verbunden werden. Als Nicht-Soziologe möchte ich keine umfassende Deutung des Materials anbieten, sondern eher in der Terminologie der Religionsgeschichte auf die gesellschaftlich-politisch relevanten Elemente des Quellenmaterials aufmerksam machen. Nicht unerwähnt darf hier die erstmalige Analyse des Aufstandes der Samaritaner im Jahre 529 auf dem Hintergrund der samaritanischen "Messiaserwartung" durch Sabine WINKLER in ihrer nur teilweise veröffentlichten Dissertation aus dem Jahre 1973 sein, die an der Humboldt-Universität in Berlin approbiert wurde.³

C) *Das politisch relevante Textmaterial der Taheb-Erwartung*

1) Ant 18,85-87

Wir besitzen keine samaritanischen Belege für die Taheb-Vorstellung, die älter sind als die entsprechenden Abschnitte des Durran bzw. des Memar Marqah, also vor das 2. bzw. 4. Jh. n. Chr. zurückreichen.⁴ Da zu dieser Zeit die Taheb-Vorstellung bereits voll entwickelt war, muß sie ältere Vorstadien haben, für die es aber keine samaritanischen Quellen gibt. Die religionsgeschichtlichen Ursprünge können daher nur unter Zuhilfenahme außersamaritanischen Materials ermittelt werden.⁵

Durch eine Analyse des Samaritanischen Pentateuch auf dem Hintergrund des relevanten Textmaterials aus Qumran konnte an anderer Stelle gezeigt werden,⁶ daß die Taheb-Vorstellung in der Juden und Samaritanern gemeinsamen spezifischen Interpretation von Dtn 18,18 wurzelt und im Kern die Erwartung des Kommens eines "Propheten wie Mose" darstellt. Josephus berichtet von einem Vorfall, der sich unweit des Garizin ereignete. Das Geschehen trug sich etwa im Jahre 36 n. Chr. unter der Prokuratur des Pilatus zu. Etwa 60 Jahre später, 93/94 n. Chr. verfaßte Josephus die Antiquitates.⁷ Der Text bei Josephus lautet:

“Unterdessen blieben auch die Samaritaner⁸ nicht von Ausschreitungen verschont. Ein *Mann, der sich aus Lügen nichts machte* und dem aus Sucht nach Massenversammlungen jedes Mittel recht war, scharte sie um sich. Er forderte sie auf, mit ihm zusammen auf den Berg Garizim zu ziehen, der bei ihnen als der heiligste Berg gilt. Er behauptete fest und steif, den Versammelten, die dort vergrabenen *heiligen Geräte zu zeigen*, wo⁹ *Mose sie hingelegt hatte*. die Waffentragenden hielten dieses Wort für glaubwürdig. Sie stellten sich in einem Dorf, das Tirathaba¹⁰ genannt wird auf und zogen immer mehr Menschen an sich heran, um in möglichst großer Zahl auf den Berg rücken zu können. Pilatus kam ihnen jedoch zuvor, indem er den Zugang nach oben mit Reiterei und Fußvolk abriegelte. Sie stießen auf die im Dorf Zusammengelaufenen, die sich zu einer Streitmacht formiert hatten, und hieben die einen nieder, die anderen schlugen sie in die Flucht. Viele wurden gefangen genommen. Von den letzteren ließ Pilatus die Vornehmsten und Einflußreichsten, die geflohen waren, hinrichten.”

Dieser Text ist in der bisherigen Forschung natürlich immer wieder als Quelle berücksichtigt und auch speziell analysiert worden. Die wesentlichsten Beiträge aus letzter Zeit stammen von KIPPENBERG, COLLINS und EGGER. Kippenberg hat sich am umfassendsten mit den hier relevanten Fragen beschäftigt.¹¹ Für unsere Thematik sind einige Termini und die beschriebene Gesamtsituation von Bedeutung.

Der Bericht bei Josephus (Ant XVIII,4,1 §85-87) setzt auf seiten der Samaritaner Vorstellungen voraus, die an den Taheb denken lassen. Der Ausdruck “Taheb” selbst ist bei den Samaritanern wohl erst seit ihrer aramäischen Sprachperiode üblich und bedeutet der “Wiederkehrende”.¹²

Die im hier behandelten Josephus-Text angedeuteten Erwartungen der Samaritaner liegen durchaus auf einer Linie mit jenen Vorstellungen, die aus späteren samaritanischen Quellen im Zusammenhang mit dem dort ausdrücklich genannten Taheb vertraut sind. Die Wiederkehr der “heiligen Geräte” ist unzweifelhaft jenes Element der Josephus-Erzählung, das den gemeinsamen Nenner mit den späteren samaritanischen Taheb-Vorstellungen bildet. Damit berührt unser Josephus-Text ausdrücklich zwei wesentliche Aspekte des Taheb: Das Zentrum der Aktivität des Taheb ist der

Garizim¹³ und eine seiner wichtigsten Funktionen ist die Wiederbringung des heiligen Zelt und der heiligen Geräte.¹⁴

Von besonderem Interesse für unsere Frage ist hier der Ausdruck „*Mann, der sich aus Lügen nichts machte*“.

Diese Semantik des Josephus deutet auf ähnliche von ihm geschilderte Vorgänge bei den Juden hin.

Pilatus ahnte natürlich, daß es sich um eine Bewegung handelte, die ähnlichen messianischen Bewegungen im Judentum entsprach.¹⁵ Das erklärt auch warum er diese Zusammenrottung gewaltsam auflöste. Die primär religiöse Absicht der Samaritaner hatte ja durchaus politische Implikationen, insofern das Kommen des Taheb auch die Hoffnung auf eine Änderung ihrer politischen Situation einschloß.¹⁶ Was das genauerhin bedeutet, wird im Text nicht gesagt. Der Sinn des Josephus-Textes ist auf dem Hintergrund der späteren samaritanischen Belege recht eindeutig. Die Samaritaner hofften, das heilige Zelt und dessen Requisiten durch ihren Anführer wieder zu bekommen. Die in Tirathaba Versammelten wollten nicht einfach die „Erneuerung ihres Heiligtums auf dem Garizim mit Waffengewalt erzwingen“,¹⁷ sondern sie erwarteten ein eschatologisches Geschehen.¹⁸ Man wird den Text als Zeugnis für eine bei den Samaritanern bestehende „Naherwartung“ verstehen dürfen.¹⁹ Für unser Thema ist damit jedoch der älteste Beleg für die politische Relevanz der Taheb-Erwartung gegeben. Mit dieser Feststellung ist allerdings noch nicht viel Konkretes über die Lage nach dem Kommen des Taheb gesagt.

Wenn man von der politischen Relevanz der Taheb-Erwartung spricht, dann hat man ein Doppeltes zu beachten. Einerseits sind solche Erwartungen durch Rückbezug auf entsprechend gedeutete Bibelstellen geprägt. Andererseits enthalten die konkreten Erwartungsgeneine je zeit- und gesellschaftsbedingte Komponente.

Vorwegnehmend läßt sich feststellen, daß die konkreten mit dem Kommen des Taheb verbundenen politischen Utopien, sich in zwei große Familien einteilen lassen. Dieses Einteilungsprinzip ergibt sich daraus, daß die geäußerten Zukunftshoffnungen auf dem Wege eines spezifischen Interpretationsvorganges mit zwei Bibeltexten in Verbindung gebracht werden, nämlich Dtn 18,15.18 und Nm 24,27.

2) Der Taheb als Prophet nach Dtn 18,15.18:

a) *Gesamtbild*

Zur Verwendung des Textmaterials ist vorwegnehmend zu bemerken, daß es hier nicht um die Darstellung des historischen Wachstumsprozesses der Vorstellungen geht, sondern um die Reflexion des vorläufigen Endstandes in der samaritanischen Literatur.

Am deutlichsten findet man die Herkunft des Taheb aus der Deutung von Dtn 18,15.18 im Mittelalter ausgedrückt. D.h. aber nicht, daß sie erst damals ihren Ursprung gehabt hätte.²⁰ Zum besseren Verständnis sei hier noch bemerkt, daß in dem bei diesem Vortrag ausgewerteten Textmaterial auf jene Stellen verzichtet wird, die den Taheb mit der Wiederbringung der heiligen Geräte in Verbindung bringen. Bei diesem Aspekt handelt es sich um eine frühe samaritanische Umprägung der gemeinjüdischen Erwartung eines zukünftigen Propheten nach der Art des Mose. Ich beziehe mich im Folgenden bewußt nur auf jene Stellen, die politische Aspekte des Taheb zum Ausdruck bringen. Hier zunächst zwei Textstellen aus dem 14. und 17. Jh., die den prophetischen Grundcharakter des Taheb betonen.

14.Jh. (Abisa ben Pinhas, Hymnus):

Zur Zeit, da der Taheb heranwächst, wird seine Würde offenbar werden. Jahwe wird ihn rufen und ihn seine Gesetze lehren. Er wird ihm die Schrift geben und ihn mit einem Prophetenamt bekleiden.

(TA 67 p. 117)²¹

17.Jh. (Marhib ben Jakob, Brief an Marshall):

...(Dtn 18,15) Das ist der, von dem unsere Gelehrten sagen, daß der Prophet erstehen wird, dem alle Völker gehorchen, an ihn glauben, an das heilige Gesetz und an den Berg Garizim. Und die Religion des Mose, des Sohnes Amrams wird erscheinen. (TA 41 p. 72f)

Diese formale Aussage ist für das gesellschaftliche Leben zunächst unwirksam, wird jedoch sofort bedeutsam, wenn sie mit der Umgestaltung von Verhältnissen in Verbindung gebracht wird.

b) *Einzelaspekte der gesellschaftlichen Relevanz*

Es ist nicht verwunderlich, daß zunächst die Erreichung der ideologischen Uniformität von der Ausübung der Prophetenfunktion des Taheb erwartet wird.

aa) *Der Sieg der Wahrheit*

Da der Taheb seinem Ursprung nach, der Prophet wie Mose ist, verbinden die Samaritaner sein Kommen mit dem Siege der von ihm verkündeten Wahrheit. Diese Sicht spiegels sich in mehreren Texten aus verschiedenen Perioden.

4.Jh. (Memar Marqah):

Er wird die Wahrheit offenbaren. (TA 88 p. 168)

14.Jh. (Abisa ben Pinhas, Hymnus):

Die Völker und die Unbeschnittenen werden jeder einzelne zu ihrer Gemeinde sprechen: "Alles worin wir sind, ist Lüge, und diese seine Religion ist die Wahrheit. Steht nun auf, gehen wir hin zu ihm.

(TA 67 p. 118)

15.Jh. (Pitron zum Asatir):

Und kein Irrtum wird bei seiner Rückkehr bestehen bleiben am Tag des Kommens des Taheb. (TA 63 p. 104)

16.Jh. (Abraham Kabasi, SjrT hSwbh):

Daß die Wahrheit offenbart wird. (TA 56 p. 96)

16.Jh. (Abraham Kabasi Widerlegung):

Er wird die Völker in einer Religion zusammenführen.

(TA 53 p. 90)

18.Jh. (Hilluk):

Die Religion des Mose, die die wahre und rechte ist, wird es durch die Macht Gottes in allen Städten geben. (TA 30 p. 56)

18.Jh. (Malef):

... in den Tagen des göttlichen Wohlgefallens. Und die Völker werden sich bei ihnen versammeln. (TA 32 p. 56)

Die Erwartung, daß die Religion des Mose, sowohl in der eigenen Gemeinde, aber auch bei den anderen Völkern zum Sieg gelangen wird, zieht sich durch alle Perioden. Es bedarf keiner wei-

teren Betonung, daß dieses Konzept nicht von dem geprägt ist, was wir heute "Meinungsvielfalt" nennen. In den Texten wird aber nicht nur die Richtigkeit der eigenen Position betont, sondern, wie etwa die Verwendung des Ausdrucks "Lüge" (TA 67 14. Jh.) zur Charakteristik anderer Religionen zeigt, werden diese Überzeugungen negativ beurteilt. Die Einheit aller Völker in einer Religion ist die eindeutige Zielvorstellung, die in allen Perioden mit der Propheten-Funktion des Taheb in Verbindung gebracht wird. Die nachbiblischen Erwartungen gehen über ihre biblische Basis hinaus, weil ja Mose, als dessen Replik der Taheb verstanden wird, einen solchen Anspruch nicht erhoben hat. Es fragt sich, welche Gruppe ihre gesellschaftlichen Interessen durch diese Funktionszuweisung an den Taheb zum Ausdruck bringen wollte. Es wäre naheliegend, die Priesterschaft dafür verantwortlich zu machen. Dabei gilt es freilich zu beachten, daß diese Wunschvorstellungen weniger aus dem Bedürfnis nach einer Erweiterung der Machtposition einer einzelnen Gruppe heraus entstanden sind. Vielmehr dürften sich darin die Erwartungen weiterer Kreise der samaritanischen Bevölkerung spiegeln, die unter dem Druck anderer Religionen litten.

bb) *Keine gefälschten Heiligen Schriften*

In engem Zusammenhang mit dieser ideologischen Einheit ist die Problematik der Authentizität der Heiligen Schriften zu sehen. Der Sitz im Leben dieses in den beiden folgenden Texten enthaltenen Wunsches wird wohl in der Lehrtätigkeit der Priester und anderer Gelehrter zu suchen sein.

14. Jh. (Abisa ben Pinhas, Hymnus):

Sie werden keine Bücher lesen, die die Zauberer fälschten.

(TA 69 p. 121)

18. Jh. (Yom Ha-Din):

Der Gläubige wird sich auf das Buch Jahwes verlassen können als ein Zeugnis für ihn (sc. den Taheb).

(TA 34 p. 58)

cc) *Sammlung der Zerstreuten*

Das Bedürfnis nach Einheit kommt nicht nur im ideologischen sondern auch in rein bevölkerungsmäßigen Bereich zum Ausdruck.

Im Hintergrund steht das Problem der samaritanischen Diaspora, die offenbar überwunden werden muß (im Mittelalter lebten in Ägypten und in Syrien (Damaskus) Samaritaner) Es wird daher ohne speziellen bibilischen Bezug — (Die bei den Juden herangezogenen biblischen Belege aus den prophetischen Schriften standen den Samaritanern ja nicht zur Verfügung) —, eine Sammlung der Zerstreuten erwartet. Die Erreichung dieses Zieles unterscheidet die Samaritaner nach ihrer eigenen Auffassung von anderen Völkern.

16.Jh. (Abraham Kabasi, Widerlegung):

Die Söhne Israels, das rechtschaffene Volk, wird sehr groß sein und sich in Freude auf immer versammeln. Den anderen wird nichts dergleichen zuteil. (TA 55 p. 92)

18.Jh. (Malef):

Er (sc. Gott) wird sammeln die Zerstreuten und ihnen nach dieser Welt einen Propheten senden, und das ist der Taheb.

(TA 32 p. 56)

dd) *Sieg des Hebräischen*

Es liegt auf der Linie der bisherigen Erwartungen, daß zur ideologischen und ethnischen Einheit auch die sprachliche Kommen muß.

14.Jh. (Abisa ben Pinhas, Hymnus):

Die Sprache der Araber wird verwirrt werden und die Sprache seines Hebräertums wird offenbar werden. (TA 67 p. 117)

16.Jh. (Ismail Ar-Rumaihi, Molad):

Alle werden in einer Sprache reden wie im Chor. (TA 53 p. 90)

18.Jh. (Mesalma Danafi, Pesah):

Die Sprache der Hebräer werden offenbar, und die Sprache der Araber möge er verwirren. (TA 37 p. 61)

Die Hoffnung auf sprachliche Einheit wird auch nicht ohne ein gewisses Maß an Polemik gegen die Sprache der Beherrscher, d.h. der Araber ausgedrückt. Immerhin ist damit der spezifische soziokulturelle Kontext dieser Erwartung erfaßbar. Es ist nicht einfach zu sagen, ob sich hinter dieser Utopie das Wunschdenken einer gelehrten Minderheit, oder das der samaritanischen Bevölkerungs-

gruppe als solcher verbirgt. Immerhin waren, wie ihre Literatur zeigt, die Samaritaner im Mittelalter zweisprachig. Das Arabische konnte ihnen für den Alltag wohl kaum als großes Problem oder als kulturelle Entfremdung erscheinen.

ee) *Kultische Reinheit des Garizim, des Landes und der Welt*

Soziologisch gesehen ist die Herbeiführung der kultischen Reinheit ein Mittel zur Ausscheidung fremder Kulturelemente.

4.Jh. (Memar Marqah):

Er wird ... die Welt reinigen. (TA 88 p. 168)

16.Jh. (Abraham Kabasi SjrT hSwbh):

Er (sc. der Garizim) wird von seiner Befleckung gereinigt werden. (TA 56 p. 96)

16.Jh. (Abraham Kabasi, Widerlegung):

Er wird das Land reinigen. (TA 53 p. 90)

Der kultische Reinigungsprozeß ist auch ein solcher der die ethnische, kulturelle und ideologische Einheit und Einheitlichkeit erreichen läßt. Diese Funktion ist ganz wesentlich mit dem Kommen des Taheb verbunden, ohne jedoch von ihm selbst besorgt zu werden. Vielmehr liegt hier die Zementierung einer eher ineffizienten Position der Priester vor.

Auf diese Weise konnte jedenfalls realpolitisch nicht gegen die Fremdherrschaft angekämpft werden.

ff) *Kampf gegen fremde Unterdrücker*

Die Überwindung der Fremdherrschaft war für die Samaritaner aber zu allen Zeiten ein zentrales politisches Anliegen. In der byzantinischen Periode konnten sie diesem Wunsch noch politisch wirksamen Ausdruck verleihen. Der Wunsch nach einer Verbesserung der Verhältnisse klingt schon in einem Text bei Marqah an:

4.Jh. (Memar Marqah):

Es wandle sich diese Bedrückung in Befreiung. (TA 84 p. 166)

Über den gewaltsamen Versuch der Samaritaner durch den bekannten Aufstand unter Justinian (527-565),²² diesen Befrei-

ungswunsch zu realisieren berichten Johannes Malalas (gest. 577) in seiner Chronographie und Johannes von Nikiu in seiner um 700 entstandenen Weltchronik. Dieses Ereignis ist in die Zeit vom 1.Sep. 528 bis zum 31.Aug.529²³ zu datieren. Geographisch gesehen reichte die Erhebung von Skythopolis bis Ceasarea, hatte ihr Zentrum im samarischen Bergland und wirkte im Süden bis Bethlehem, wo die Geburtsbasilika zerstört wurde. Die Ursache für diesen Aufstand war nach WINKLER das 529 erlassene Edikt (Cod. Iust. I, V, 17) des Justinian "De Haereticis et Manichaeis et Samaritis".²⁴ Diese Gesetzgebung hatte ideologische und ökonomische Ziele: Synagogenzerstörung, Verbot des Wiederaufbaues und Vererbungsunfähigkeit. Die Zahl der damals lebenden Samaritaner dürfte etwa 200.000 betragen haben, obwohl eine Schätzung sehr schwierig ist. Diese Bevölkerung bestand wohl aus vermögenden Grundbesitzern, Großhändlern, Reedern (Caesarea), den Amtsträgern der Gemeinde, Gelehrten (deren ökonomische Situation nicht leicht bestimmbar ist), Fischern, Jägern, Bauern, Weinbauern bis zu Hirten und wohl auch Sklaven.

Ohne auf die Ereignisse im Einzelnen einzugehen, sei die Darstellung des Johannes von Nikiu in Erinnerung gerufen: "Ein samaritanischer Brigantenführer versammelte um sich alle Samariter und entfesselte einen großen Krieg. Er leitete eine große Anzahl von Menschen seines Volkes irre, indem er trügerisch versicherte, daß er der Gesandte Gottes sei, um das Königreich der Samariter wiederherzustellen."²⁵ Johannes Malalas (gest. 577) nennt²⁶ den Namen des Anführers: Julian, schildert das Ereignis aber nicht in denselben "messianischen" Farben, wie Johannes von Nikiu. Das bring S. WINKLER²⁷ zu dem Gesamturteil: "Der samaritanische Messianismus trat 529/30 in einer insgesamt als nationalistisch zu bezeichnenden, politisch aktiven Erscheinungsform zutage."

Die Niederschlagung dieses Aufstandes führte in der Folge zu einer Dezimierung der Samaritaner und zu einem Niedergang, der sie politisch bedeutungslos werden ließen. Die Folge war aber keineswegs ein Erlöschen der Erwartungen, die offenbar auch schon die Bewegung zur Zeit des Pilatus stimuliert hatte. Die im Mittelalter artikulierten einschlägigen Erwartungen, sind umgekehrt proportional zur realen Situation, die etwa dadurch gekennzeichnet ist, daß der mittelalterliche jüdische Reisende Benjamin von

Tudela (1174) von insgesamt 2000 Samaritanern spricht. An eine Aufstandsbewegung war nicht mehr zu denken. Wir haben es mit einer Gemeinde zu tun, die den Verlauf der Geschichte nicht mehr beeinflussen konnte.²⁸

In diesem Rahmen gehört die in einem Text des 16. Jh. ausgedrückte Fremdenfeindlichkeit.

16. Jh. (Abraham Kabasi, Widerlegung):

...es wird zur Zeit des Taheb und der Periode göttlichen Wohlgefallens das Fremde ausgemerzt. Wenn die Feinde zurückkehren, so ist es vergänglich. (TA 54 p. 92)

Der Text richtet sich weniger gegen das Fremde als solches als gegen das Fremde, das zugleich auch einen entfremdenden Herrschaftsanspruch stellt. Zu beachten ist auch, daß nicht klar gesagt wird, wodurch das Fremde "ausgemerzt wird".

Wie schwer dieses Problem innerhalb der prophetischen Sicht des Taheb zu lösen war, zeigt der folgende Text:

15. Jh. (Pitron zum Asatir):

Er (sc. Mose) sah die Tage der göttlichen Abwendung und alles, was sich in Israel zutragen würde. (TA 64 p. 105)

Im weiteren Kontext wird gesagt, daß Mose darum bittet, daß seine beiden Söhne Gersom und Eleazar bis zum Tag des Kommens des Taheb verborgen werden mögen, damit sie an diesem Tag mit einem Heerbann von Osten her einziehen. Dem primär prophetischen Taheb stand das Mittel militärischer Gewaltanwendung eben nicht zur Verfügung. Hier liegt sicher ein Ansatzpunkt für die spätere Königs-Funktion des Taheb. D.h., daß die Samaritaner eine aktivere Rolle in dieser Hinsicht zu spielen beabsichtigten.

gg) *Friede und Gerechtigkeit in der Zeit des Taheb*

Ein wichtiges Element, das mit dem prophetischen Taheb verbunden erscheint, ist die Hoffnung auf Frieden, wobei die Mittel zur Erreichung dieses Zustandes nicht näher beschrieben werden.

2. Jh. (Amrah Darah, Durran):

Glücklich die Welt in der Stunde, da sie kommen, der Taheb und die Ordnung der Rahuta. Denn er verfügt Friede.

Die Barmherzigkeit breitet sich aus. Die Finsternis wird besiegt. Die Bosheit wird vertrieben. Die Geschöpfe finden Ruhe.

(TA 94 p. 174)

4.Jh. (Memar Marqah):

Kommen möge der Taheb in Frieden!

(TA 88 p. 168)

c) *Regelung innersamaritanischer Verhältnisse*

aa) *Der Ältestenrat neben dem Taheb*

Die Zustandsschilderung, wie sie sich aus den bis jetzt genützten Texten ergibt, läßt eigentlich jede Leitungsstruktur der Gesellschaft vermissen. Damit spiegelt sich eine Situation wieder, die der für die Zeit des Mose von der Bibel vorausgesetzten weithin ähnlich ist. Wir befinden uns in der vorköniglichen Zeit. Dem entspricht die Existenz eines Ältestenrates, wie ihn Mose nach Nm 11,6 einberufen hat. Das ergibt sich ziemlich klar aus den folgenden Texten.

4.Jh. (Memar Marqah):

... und die Häupter des Volkes wieder einsetzen, wie sie (ursprünglich) waren.

(TA 88 p. 168)

16.Jh. (Abraham Kabasi, Widerlegung):

Er wird ins Schofar stoßen und sich 70 Älteste erwählen, wie es sie zu Beginn gab; aus den Gelehrten und Weisen. Er wird ihren Rang erhöhen, und sie werden Wohlgefallen, Ehrerbietung, Gunst, Wertschätzung ohne Zahl genießen.

(TA 54 p. 92)

18.Jh. (Yom Ha-Din):

...daß sie ihn (sc. den Taheb) fürchten, wenn sie (sc. die Samaritaner) ihn sehen. So daß er ihr Murren zum Verstummen bringt (Nm 17,25).

(TA 34 p. 58)

Aus der Zuweisung einer Rolle in Bezug auf die samaritanische Selbstverwaltung an den Taheb ergibt sich der Wunsch nach einer Stärkung des Ältestenrates, der neben dem Hohenpriester bestand. Ob Abraham Kabasi etwa (vgl. oben TA 54) selbst ihm angehörte wissen wir nicht. Jedenfalls war er engster Berater des damaligen Hohenpriesters Pinhas ben Eleazar, mit dem er 1538 von Damaskus nach Sichen zog. In jedem Fall wird man den Sitz im Leben für diesen Wunsch nach gesellschaftlicher Aufwertung des Älte-

stenrates nicht nur bei dieser Gruppe selbst zu suchen haben. Hier spiegelt sich vielmehr das allgemeine Bedürfnis nach einer stabilen innersamaritanischen Gesellschaftsordnung wieder. Der Taheb als prophetisch verstandene Gestalt konnte diesen Bereich nicht genügend abdecken. So gesehen ist es nicht verwunderlich, daß auch die Samaritaner die Königs-Option näher in Betracht zogen.

bb) *Auserwählte und Verworfenene*

Dahinter verbergen sich natürlich innersamaritanische Spannungen, die zwar soziologisch interessant wären, im Rahmen der Taheb-Vorstellung aber merkwürdig unbestimmt bleiben. Zur weiteren Klärung dieses Sachverhaltes müßte man über das für dieses Referat herangezogene Textmaterial hinausgehen.

4. Jh. (Memar Marqah):

Er scheide zwischen Auserwählten und Verworfenen.

(TA 84 p. 166)

Damit sind die politischen Funktionen des nach dem Muster des Mose prophetisch verstandenen Taheb und die daran geknüpften utopischen Hoffnungen beschrieben. Die Hoffnungen waren so geartet, daß sie innerhalb des prophetischen Modells auch theoretisch nicht realisierbar erschienen. Es ist daher nicht verwunderlich, daß die Samaritaner dieses prophetische Taheb-Modell zu ergänzen suchten. Das geschah unter Zugrundelegung des Bileamsspruches aus Nm 24.

Aus der Verbindung des Taheb mit dem eschatologisch gedeuteten Bileamsspruch fließen dem Taheb andersartige Funktionen zu, wodurch sich auch das Gesamtbild der Zustände zur Zeit des Taheb ändert.

3) Der Taheb als König nach Nm 24,17

a) *Das Gesamtbild*

Ehe der traditionsgeschichtliche Befund kurz dargestellt wird möchte ich ein kurzes Gespräch mit dem samaritanischen Priester Pinhas in Holon, das ich 1987 führte wiedergeben.²⁹ Zunächst fragte ich ihn, ob der Taheb Priester sein werde. Die Reaktion war

ein entschiedenes Nein. Als ich dann fragte, ob der Taheb König ist, folgte auf ein zögerndes Nein ein ebenso zögerndes Ja. Diese spontane, im aktuellen samaritanischen Bewußtsein wurzelnde Antwort entspricht durchaus dem traditionsgeschichtlichen Quellenbefund: Die Königliche Rolle des Taheb ist traditionsgeschichtlich gesehen sekundär.³⁰

In dem zu Beginn herangezogenen Josephus-Text (Ant 18,85-87) spielt der königliche Aspekt keine explizite Rolle. Das Waffentragen der sich versammelnden Männer allein reicht für eine solche Annahme nicht aus. Im jüdischen Bereich war die messianische Deutung von Nm 24,17 schon zur selben Zeit heimisch wie die Deutung von Dtn 18,15.18 auf einen künftigen Heilspropheten. Wichtiger Beleg dafür ist 4QTest aus Qumran. Für den samaritanischen Bereich ist eine solche Deutung erst für das Mittelalter nachweisbar. Dabei sind zwei Stufen belegbar. Zunächst wurde Nm 24,17 schon im Memar Marqah (Tibat Marke, p. 140 ed. Ben Hayyim) herangezogen aber frühestens ab dem 11.Jh. (Asatir)³¹ und sicher im 13.Jh. auf das Kommen eines (Zweiten) Königreiches gedeutet. Ghazzal Al Doweik, der im 13.Jh. eine Schrift über die Beweise für das "Zweite Königreich" verfaßte, zog dafür Nm 24,17 als Belegstelle heran, brachte dort den Text aber noch nicht mit dem Taheb in Verbindung. Derselbe Autor weist jedoch in seinem Kommentar zur Bileam-Erzählung darauf hin, daß man die Stelle als Aussage über den Taheb verstehen könne.³² Damit wird eine traditionsgeschichtliche Nahtstelle sichtbar, die zeigt, seit wann sich etwa der Funktionszuwachs des Taheb vollzog. Das gesellschaftliche Bedürfnis äußert sich in einer neuartigen Kombination biblischer Belege: der Bileam-Spruch in seiner eschatologischen Deutung wurde nun mit dem Taheb verbunden.

15.Jh. (Pitron zum Asatir):

... er zerschmettert Moab die Schläfen. (Nm 24,17) Hier sagt Bileam etwas, worin er sich auf das Kommen des göttlichen Wohlgefallen und des Taheb bezieht. (TA 58 p. 101)

16.Jh. (Abraham Kabasi, SjrT Swbh):

... der Bileam-Spruch, der im heiligen Buch ausgebreitet ist, daß nämlich Esau herrschen wird und nachher Israel (Nm 24,18SP). Zweimal an der Zahl. Sie (sc. die Herrschaft) wird von ihm genommen und hierauf zu Israel zurückkehren. (TA 56 p. 98)

Damit ergibt sich für die Samaritaner, die in ihrer Geschichte keinen König kennen, die Möglichkeit unter Berufung auf die Bibel von einem (Zweiten) Königreich zu sprechen. Im Bileamspruch ist ja (Nm 24,7: König; Nm 24,27: Zepter) von einem zukünftigen König in Israel die Rede. Damit ist auch im Penta-teuch und nicht nur in den von den Samaritanern nicht akzeptierten Königsbüchern von einem zukünftigen Königtum in Israel die Rede. Der König in diesem sogenannten Zweiten Königreich sollte nach dieser Deutung der Taheb sein. Von daher sind die folgenden Aussagen über den Taheb zu verstehen.

14.Jh. (Molad Mose hebr.):

Und Taheb! dein Königreich werde aufgerichtet aller Orten!

(TA 44, p. 80)

16.Jh. (Abraham Kabasi, SjrT hSwbh):

... daß ... das Königreich zurückkomme.

(TA 56 p. 96)

16.Jh. (Abraham Kabasi, Widerlegung):

... er rettet gläubige Menschen aus der Hand der Bösewichter. Der König wird durch seine Hand sterben.

(TA 51 p. 88)

18.Jh. (Yom Ha-Din):

Dennoch blieb der Bund mit ihnen (sc. den in die Diaspora gezogenen Samaritanern) bestehen und sie werden zurückkehren bei der Wiederkehr des Zweiten Königreiches.

(TA 35 p. 60)

18.Jh. (Malef):

Und das Königreich der Söhne Israels wird wiederkehren, wie es war in den Tagen des göttlichen Wohlgefallens.

(TA 32 p. 56)

18.Jh. (Hilluk):

Und seine Herrschaft wird währen auf immer.

(TA 30 p. 53)

b) *Überwindung der Fremdherrschaft*

Man wird diesen von den Samaritanern neuen geschaffenen Interpretationszusammenhang wohl auf zeitgeschichtlich bedingte Bedürfnisse zurückzuführen haben, die natürlich nicht erst im Mittelalter aufgetaucht sind. Dieser Aspekt trat bereits bei der Funktionsbeschreibung des prophetischen Taheb zu Tage.

Neu ist der Umstand, daß diese Hoffnungen durch einen König erfüllt werden sollten.³³ Man könnte davon ausgehen, daß das

Königtum für effizienter als die Priesterherrschaft gehalten wurde. An die königliche Funktion des Taheb knüpfen sich dann auch sehr konkrete Hoffnungen auf bessere Lebensbedingungen für die von außen unterdrückten Samaritaner.

aa) *Soziale Befreiung*

18.Jh. (Mesalma Danafi, Pesah):

Er bringe zum Verschwinden den, der über euch herrscht, so daß sie (sc. die Samaritaner) an seiner Stelle herrschen. Du wirst einst in Sicherheit wohnen ohne Eindringling. (Ta 37 p. 61)

bb) *Unterwerfung der Völker*

Eigentlich ist diese Befreiung die Frucht einer Unterwerfung der anderen Völker. Bei der Sicht des Taheb als bloßer Prophet, war das Verhältnis zu den anderen Völkern dadurch bestimmt, daß diese sich der Wahrheit von selbst zuwenden, oder von dem mit Macht ausgestatteten prophetischen Taheb dieser seiner Wahrheit unterworfen werden. Indem der Taheb mit königlicher Funktion ausgestattet wurde, übt er eine beherrschende Funktion über andere Völker im weitgehend politischen Sinn aus, wobei den Samaritanern in offenkundig utopischer Erwartung eine dominierende Stellung zukommen sollte.

14.Jh. (Abisa ben Pinhas, Hymnus):

und alle Völker werden unterworfen werden. (TA 67 p. 117)

16.Jh. (Abraham Kabasi, SjrT hSwbh):

Und was sie bei seiner (sc. Josuas) Herrschaft nicht erfaßten, so weit werden seine Grenzen reichen, und sie werden es besitzen und erben in dieser Herrschaft. (TA 56 p. 96)

16.Jh. (Abraham Kabasi, Widerlegung):

(Nm 24,18). Er wird über alle Städte und Meere herrschen, innen und außen, von einem Ende bis zum andern. Er wird ihnen ihre König-Reiche nie mehr wiederbringen, bis zum letzten Tag.

(TA 53 p. 91)

16.Jh. (Abraham Kabasi, Widerlegung):

Der König wird durch seine Hand sterben. Er wird die Stadt zerstö-

ren, in der der König sein wird. Er führt aus ihr die Frauen in die Gefangenschaft, und all ihre Bewohner wird er plündern.

(TA 51 p. 88)

18. Jh. (Mesalma Danaſi, Pesah):

Und kein Volk rühme sich mehr als du. Du wirst über viele Nationen herrschen, aber kein Volk wird über dich herrschen.

(TA 37 p. 61)

4) Der Taheb ist nicht Priester.

Es erscheint bemerkenswert, daß für die Endzeit Funktionäre vorgesehen sind, die es bei den Samaritanern nicht mehr oder noch nie gab. Es wird jedoch kein spezieller Priester in der Zukunft erwartet. So ist der Taheb Prophet und König, aber nicht Priester. Es ist in der Endzeit eine Kontinuität der priesterlichen Funktionen oder eine neuerliche Ermöglichung derselben aber keine völlige Neuordnung vorgesehen.

a) *Traditionsgeschichte der Vorstellung*

Zunächst wird klar zwischen dem Taheb und dem Priestertum unterschieden.

16. Jh. (Abraham Kabasi, Widerlegung):

Aber der Senior Mattanah sagte, daß der Taheb erstehen werde aus den Söhnen des Pinhas. Das steht aber nicht im Gesetz. Denn es kommt den Söhnen des Pinhas der Bund des Priestertums zu und nicht die Königswürde.

(TA 52 p. 89)

Allerdings besteht das Problem, daß die eigentlich priesterliche Linie im 17. Jh. ausgestorben ist, und nun nur mehr Leviten die priesterlichen Funktionen ausüben. Das kommt in folgendem Text zum Ausdruck:

18. Jh. (Yom Ha-Din):

Was den Einwand angeht, daß sie (sc. die Söhne des Pinhas) keinen beglaubigten Nachkommen haben und (daher) kein Priestertum (besteht) so ist dem Fragesteller folgende Antwort zu geben:

(TA 35 p. 59)

Auf diesen Sachverhalt soll hier nicht näher eingegangen wer-

den. Für unsere Überlegungen wesentlich ist der Umstand, daß die Priesterklasse unverändert bestehen bleibt.

b) *Funktionen der Priesterklasse nach dem Auftreten des Taheb*

14. Jh. (Abisa ben Pinhas, Hymnus):

Der Priester wird die Räucherpfanne nehmen und sein Räucherwerk opfern.
(J1 = TA 69 p. 121)

D) *Auswertung*

Die samaritanischen Vorstellungen über die Zeit des Taheb sind durch starke Schematisierung geprägt, die wohl daher rührt, daß die Samaritaner ohne Unterbrechung unter einer Fremdherrschaft standen. Die inneren Herrschaftsstrukturen wurden kaum, jedenfalls ergibt sich das nicht aus den Texten, kritisiert, da ihre Träger als unfrei gelten mußten. So gesehen erscheint, wenn man diese Terminologie gebrauchen will, der "Klassenfeind" immer als der Fremde.³⁴ In diesem Bereich haben jedoch die kultischen Reinheitsvorschriften einen wesentlichen Beitrag dazu geleistet, die Trennung von den Fremden anzustreben, ja diese zu bekämpfen.³⁵

Es lassen sich in der Taheb-Erwartung durchaus jene Elemente erkennen, die im politischen Sinn zum Messianismus gehören³⁶ und die Kippenberg im Anschluß an Pereira de Queiroz³⁷ aufgezählt hat: "Ein unterdrücktes oder unzufriedenes Kollektiv; die Hoffnung auf die Ankunft eines göttlichen Boten, der die Leidenszeit beendet; der Glaube an ein Paradies, das zugleich heilig und profan ist." Diese Elemente sind durch die erörterten Texte hinlänglich belegt. Wichtig ist jedoch, daß die Texte auch eine starke nationale, oder auch nationalistische Färbung der Taheb-Erwartung verraten. Das wird aber in dem Josephus-Bericht nicht so deutlich. Man wird in diesem Zusammenhang daher auf die Analyse der Zeloten-Darstellung bei Josephus durch W.R. Farmer verweisen dürfen. Ähnlich wie Josephus den Nationalismus der Zeloten verschwieg, verschleierte er auch den nationalistischen Hintergrund der samaritanischen Bewegung zur Zeit des Pilatus.³⁸ Dieses nationalistische Element ist in den samaritanischen Texten eindeutig belegt. Wenn auch Termini wie "Freiheit" oder "Erlö-

sung'' nicht verwendet werden, so geht es inhaltlich um dasselbe, indem die Wiederherstellung der Autonomie, der Gerichtsbarkeit sowie der Tribut- und Religionsfreiheit erwartet werden. Es ist jedoch wesentlich festzuhalten, daß man sich damit nicht zufriedengab, sondern die Herrschaftsausübung über andere ausdrücklich in dieses Konzept endzeitlicher Erlösung eingeschlossen ist. In den mit dem Auftreten des Taheb verbundenen Erwartungen wird kein revolutionäres Element im eigentlichen Sinn sichtbar,³⁹ faktisch macht sich ein solches aber in den Ereignissen zur Zeit des Pilatus und den Vorgängen im 6. Jh.⁴⁰ bemerkbar.

Der Taheb ist zunächst Anführer eines Personenverbandes und wird erst in weiterer Folge zum König, also mit territorialer Verfügungsgewalt ausgestattet gesehen. In keinem Fall ist der Taheb Revolutionär, sondern vielmehr, wie seine aramäische Namensform sagt, Wiederkehrender, der nicht nur die heiligen Geräte, sondern auch die alte Ordnung, die Rahuta, wiederbringt. Diese Gestalt war weitgehend theoretisch und hatte ihren Sitz im Leben in kollektiver Unzufriedenheit. Mit Recht betonte kürzlich Goodman: "Fervent millenarian expectation could coexist with complete loyalty to the political order..."⁴¹ Es ist in diesem Zusammenhang daher auch bemerkenswert, daß sich keine Hinweise in der samaritanischen Literatur finden, wie etwa das Kommen des Taheb beschleunigt werden könnte. Die kollektive Unzufriedenheit richtet sich auch nur sehr sporadisch gegen innersamaritanische Zustände und vor allem nie gegen das Priestertum. Man wird also davon auszugehen haben, daß die literarische Vermittlung der Taheb-Tradition überwiegend von priesterlichen Interessen geleitet war,⁴² oder daß die prekäre Situation der Samaritaner bedingte, daß sich die Kritik nicht gegen die faktisch für die Gestaltung des samaritanischen Gemeinwesens zuständigen Priester richtete. Was man vom Taheb erwartete, war angesichts der realen Situation eine Utopie. Im Unterschied zum jüdischen Messianismus war die samaritanische Taheb-Erwartung weniger stark auf reales politisches Handeln hin gerichtet.

Im Mittelalter, da diese Lehre vom Taheb bei den Samaritanern ihre Systematisierung erfuhr, war man sich, wie der folgende Text, mit dem ich schließen möchte, zeigt, des utopischen Charakters dieser Vorstellung wohl bewußt:

14.Jh. (Abisa ben Pinhas, Hymnus):

In dem Abschnitt: "Einen Propheten will ich Ihnen erstehen lassen aus der Mitte der Brüder wie dich." (Dtn 18,18). Er wird König sein, bekleidet mit ehrfurchtgebietendem Schauder. Gerechtes Gericht wird er maßvoll halten. Dann wird keine Sünde mehr sein, kein Zorn, keine Intrige. Das ist Wahrheit und nicht Eitelkeit. Du Suchender, steh auf! Sag nicht das ist Betrug, sonst soll jede Schande an dir haften. (TA 68 p. 120)

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¹ Vgl. dazu Izhak Ben-Zvi, *The Book of the Samaritans* (hb.), Jerusalem, 2.Aufl. 1970,365. Aus der sonstigen hebräisch-sprachigen Fachliteratur ist, was das eigentliche Thema dieses Aufsatzes betrifft, nur noch auf den Artikel von Menahem Haran, "mwSg h"Thb", *Tarbiz* 23 (1952) 96-111 zu verweisen. Für die aktuelle Situation der Samaritaner vgl. Reinhard Pummer, "Nablus und Tel Aviv - Tradition und Moderne," in: Kreisel W., *Geisteshaltung und Umwelt*, Fs. M. Büttner, Aachen 1988, 405-414. Vgl. ferner zum gesamten Bereich: Alan D. Crown (ed.), *The Samaritans*, Tübingen (Mohr) 1989 und Ferdinand Dexinger-Reinhard Pummer (ed.), *Die Samaritaner* (WdF 604), Darmstadt (WBG) 1991.

² *Religion und Klassenbildung im antiken Judäa*, Göttingen (Vandenhoeck) 1978, 9: "Die vorliegende Arbeit ist ein Versuch, die Inhalte religiöser, jüdischer Überlieferungen im Zusammenhang sozialen Lebens zu betrachten."

³ Sabine Winkler, *Die Samaritaner unter Justinian*, Berlin (Diss. Humboldt-Univ.) 1973. Wichtige Ergebnisse wurden von ihr veröffentlicht: Sabine Winkler, "Die Samaritaner in den Jahren 529/30", *Klio* 43-45 (1965) 435-457.

⁴ Das gesamte samaritanische Textmaterial bis zum 18.Jh. ist zu finden bei Ferdinand Dexinger, *Der Taheb*. Ein "messianischer" Heilsbringer der Samaritaner, Salzburg (O. Müller Vlg.) 1986.

⁵ Vgl. Dexinger, *Taheb* 176.

⁶ Ferdinand Dexinger, "Der "Prophet wie Mose" in Qumran und bei den Samaritanern," in: *Fs. Delcor*, AOAT 215 (1985) 97-111.

⁷ H. Hammer, *Traktat vom Samaritanermessias*, Bonn 1913,14 betont mit Recht, daß wir überhaupt nicht viel mehr über die Samaritaner zur Zeit Jesu wissen.

⁸ Rita Egger, *Josephus Flavius und die Samaritaner* (NTOA 4), Freiburg 1986, 169-173. 247-250. 310 hat jüngst mit ihrer genauen semantischen Untersuchung gezeigt, daß Josephus hier von Samaritanern und nicht von heidnischen Samaritern spricht.

⁹ Es ist leider nicht möglich, diesen Satzteil so zu übersetzen, daß damit ausgedrückt wird, die heiligen Geräte seien in dem Zustand gewesen, in dem Mose sie hinterließ. Damit würde sich dann die Schwierigkeit lösen, die darin besteht, daß Mose selbst die heiligen Geräte am Garizim verborgen habe. Für die hilfreichen Hinweise dazu danke ich hier Prof. H. Schwabe (Wien).

¹⁰ Nach anderen Handschriften heißt der Ort "Tirathana". Man vermutet allgemein, es handle sich um das 6 km SW von Sicheim gelegene et-Tire. Vgl. J.A. Montgomery, *The Samaritans*, Philadelphia 1907, 146 Anm 15. S. Klein, "רז חקו תימ בזמן התימני," *Jerusalem* 10(1914) 133-160, 146f vermutet, daß der Name von *twr³ tb²*, einer Bezeichnung der Samaritaner für den Garizim komme, und der Ort, am Fuß des Berges gelegen, von diesem auch seinen Namen erhalten habe.

¹¹ Hans G. Kippenberg, *Garizim und Synagoge*, Berlin 1971, 113f, 250.

¹² Vgl. Dexinger, *Taheb* 33.

¹³ Vgl. die bei Dexinger, *Taheb* gesammelten Texte TA 24, 25, 30, 36, 41, 53, 67, 71, 72, 73, 84, 91, 95.

¹⁴ Vgl. die bei Dexinger, *Taheb* gesammelten Texte TA 23, 25, 27, 30, 32, 34, 36, 41, 50, 53, 67, 72, 89.

¹⁵ Vgl. Dazu F. Dexinger, "Ein Messianisches Szenarium als Gemeingut des Judentums in nachherodianischer Zeit?" *Kairos* 17 (1975) 249-278.

¹⁶ Winkler, *Samaritaner unter Justinian* 546 erkennt völlig richtig, daß neben religiösen auch nationale und soziale Erwartungen hier eine tragende Rolle spielten.

¹⁷ So Joachim Jeremias, *Die Passahfeier der Samaritaner*, Giessen 1932, 58.

¹⁸ So Marilyn F. Collins, "The Hidden Vessels in Samaritan Traditions", *JSJ* 3 (1972) 97-116, 97.

¹⁹ E. Vilmar, *Abulfathi Annales Samaritani*, Gotha 1865, XLVI: "Mess. adventum proximum esse sperabant."

²⁰ Vgl. dazu besonders Dexinger, *Prophet*.

²¹ Diese Angaben beziehen sich auf die Numerierung in der Textsammlung Dexinger, *Taheb*. Dort findet man auch den weiteren Textzusammenhang und auch das übrige auf den Taheb bezogene Textmaterial.

²² Vgl. zum Folgenden Winkler, *Samaritaner in den Jahren 529/30* und Winkler, *Samaritaner unter Justinian*.

²³ Vgl. Winkler, *Samaritaner unter Justinian* 25ff.

²⁴ Vgl. zur Gesetzgebung des Justinian nun Alfredo M. Rabello, *Giustiniano, Ebrei e Samaritani alla luce delle fonti storico-letterarie, ecclesiastiche e giuridiche*, Mailand (Giuffrè) 1987.

²⁵ dt. Übersetzung des Abschnitts bei Kippenberg, *Gazarim* 120. Äthiopischer Text bei H. Zotenberg, *Chronique de Jean Evêque de Nikiou*, Paris 1883, 164f. 398.

²⁶ Chronogr. XVIII; PG 97, 656f.

²⁷ *Samaritaner unter Justinian* 132.

²⁸ Bei der Diskussion in Groningen machte Kippenberg auf das Phänomen der kognitiven Dissonanz aufmerksam, das die Entwicklung realitätsferner bedinge. Die Hoffnung auf einen davidischen Messias im jüdischen Bereich entwickelte sich analog dazu auch erst in einer Zeit, da das Königtum nicht mehr existierte. L. Festinger - H.W. Rieken - S. Schachter, *When Prophecy Fails*. New York 1956.

²⁹ In der Diskussion merkte F. Garcia-Martinez ergänzend und zutreffend an, daß die Taheb-Erwartung bei den heutigen Samaritanern insgesamt nicht sehr stark sei.

³⁰ Vgl. Dexinger, *Taheb* 34f.

³¹ Vgl. die im obigen Text TA 58 explizit gegebene Deutung der Asatir-Stelle im 15. Jh.

³² Vgl. Dexinger, *Taheb* 136f. Als Alternative nennt Ghazzal die Deutung auf Pinhas, der Nm 31,6 genannt wird.

³³ Dem widerspricht nur der Text bei Johannes v. Nikiu, der aber vielleicht von christlicher Messias-Terminologie bestimmt ist.

³⁴ Vgl. dazu die Bemerkung bei Max Weber. *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*, Bd. III: *Das antike Judentum*, Tübingen (Mohr) 1920 (Nachdr. 1976), 351: "Die israelitische Ethik insbesondere erhielt ihr dafür entscheidendes Gepräge durch den exklusiven Charakter, welchen ihr die Entwicklung der Priesterthora gab. Auch die ägyptische Ethik war exklusiv insofern, als sie, wie alle antiken Ethiken, den Nichtlandsmann selbstverständlich ignorierte."

³⁵ Vgl. dazu Martin Goodman, *The Ruling Class of Judea. The Origin of the Jewish Revolt against Rome A.D. 66-70*, Cambridge (Univ. Pr.) 1987, 108, der das komplexe Verhältnis von kultischen Reinheitsvorschriften und gesellschaftlicher Isolierung für das rabbinische Judentum beschreibt.

³⁶ Vgl. die Aufzählung bei Kippenberg, *Religion* 164.

³⁷ M.I. Pereira de Queiroz, *Réforme et Révolution dans les Sociétés traditionnelles*, Paris 1968, 7.

³⁸ W.R. Farmer, *Maccabees, Zealots and Josephus. An Inquiry into Jewish Nationalism in the Greco-Roman Period*, New York 1958, 6ff. Vgl. Kippenberg, *Religion* 166 Anm 63.

³⁹ S. Winkler, *Samaritaner unter Justinian* 102 bemerkt: "... so ist zunächst zu fragen, wie weit der Samaritanismus etwa selbst radikal-soziale Ideen oder in irgendeiner ideologischen Form den Protest gegen bestehende gesellschaftliche Verhältnisse enthält. *Es ist nicht der Fall.*"

⁴⁰ Vgl. S. Winkler, *Samaritaner unter Justinian*.

⁴¹ Goodman, *Ruling Class*, 90.

⁴² Vgl. dazu die Bemerkungen bei M. Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze* III, 250: "Wo eine Verheißung einer Zukunftspersönlichkeit auftritt, ist es bei ihr (sc. der Priesterschaft) nicht ein König, sondern ein Prophet wie Mose (Dtn 18,15.19)."

CARNIVAL IN RELIGION

THE FEAST OF FOOLS IN FRANCE

INGVILD SALID GILHUS

In 1445 the Theological Faculty of Paris addressed a letter to the bishops and chapters of France. The letter sharply condemned a feast which took place in different cathedrals and churches during Christmas and the New Year: "Priests and clerks may be seen wearing masks and monstrous visages at the hours of office. They dance in the choir dressed as women, panders or minstrels. They sing wanton songs. They eat black puddings at the horn of the altar while the celebrant is saying mass. They play at dice there. They cense with stinking smoke from the soles of old shoes. They run and leap through the church, without a blush at their own shame. Finally they drive about the town and its theatres in shabby traps and carts; and rouse the laughter of their fellows and the bystanders in infamous performances with indecent gestures and verses scurrilous and unchaste".¹ In this letter the feast is called "the Feast of Fools" (*festum Fatuorum*).² It is a splendid example of carnival in religion.³ Much of its fame is due to the role played by an ass during its celebrations. For that reason it is also called *asinaria festa*, "the Feast of Asses".

The problems discussed in this article are how carnivalesque meanings are produced, what sort of meanings they are and what functions they have. These questions will be discussed with special reference to the carnivalesque travesties of religious symbols in the Feast of Fools. Two premises must be stated: On the one hand, that there exist universal forms and contents in carnivalesque religion, but on the other hand, that their meanings are always produced in an interplay with the religious systems they are traversing. The universal forms of carnival consist in reversals and incongruities. Examples of reversals and incongruities can be the using of masks, talking gibberish, making animal noises instead of articulated speech, men dressing in female clothes etc. Similar elements and

similar combinations of elements are easily found in different places in the world. Accordingly, what distinguishes the Feast of Fools does not rely on any specific combination of forms and features. Its meaning must be sought in relation to the Catholic Church and to the religious universe of that Church.⁴ The meanings created by the interplay between carnivalesque forms and the Catholic religion are transient and passing, and have not left tangible relics in the shape of a new alternative ideological system. This lack of new ideology is in accordance with the playful character of the feast and with its lack of an exterior goal. Finally, why is such a feast held? To blow off steam, for the sake of didactics or just for fun? This article will argue for the priority of the last explanation.

Former investigations of the feast can be classified in three groups, historical, phenomenological/structural and anthropological. The historical approach has concentrated on the hypothetical origin, growth and decline of the feast, and has rather viewed the feast in connection with pagan Roman feasts than with Catholic religion.⁵ The structural and phenomenological approach has analysed the feast in relation to fools, clowning, carnival and the ludicrous literary genres of the Middle Ages.⁶ The anthropological approach has compared the feast with carnivals and clowning in illiterate cultures. It has especially stressed the reverse behaviour characteristic for carnivals and clowning.⁷ The present investigation is primarily structural and phenomenological. Unlike its predecessors it will not focus on the relationship between the feast and Medieval carnivalesque culture, but on its relationship with the Catholic religion.

History of the Feast

The Feast of Fools took place roughly in the period from the end of the eleventh to the sixteenth century. In its excessive form it was never approved by the Church authorities; on the contrary it was restricted and regularly forbidden. It is known mainly through its opponents, the ecclesiastical authorities.

The oldest mention of the feast is at the end of the 11th century, by the rector of theology in Paris, Joannes Belethus.⁸ In a brief comment he tells that these are four *tripudia*, religious dance feasts,

after Christmas. The feasts belong respectively to the deacons, the priests, the choir-children and the subdeacons. The last feast is called the Feast of Fools. The common dates for its performance in the different churches in France are the Circumcision, the Epiphany or the octave of the Epiphany.

In 1199 the bishop of Paris, Eudes de Sully, wrote a decree against "the Feast of Fools" (*festum fatuorum*) in Notre Dame.⁹ Like the Theological Faculty 250 years later, he wanted to reform the feast and stop its abuses.

A reformed version of the text used in the feast is preserved in the *Missels de Fou* from Sens (ca. 1220).¹⁰ This is a text that the subdeacons were allowed to use during the Mass on the Feast of Asses (*asinaria festa*). It includes "the Prose of the Ass", a hymn sung one or more times in praise of the ass.¹¹ Neither this hymn nor the general text of the office is provoking. From Beauvais there exist two similar manuscripts. One of them has an *Officium* which is longer than that of Sens and stems approximately from the same time.¹² From Beauvais there is in addition a description of a procession, representing the Flight into Egypt. In this procession an ass carried a young girl with a child in her arms. Here too, a version of the Prose of the Ass was used.¹³ This version is "longer and more ludicrous than that of either the Sens or the Beauvais *Officium*".¹⁴

During the following centuries there were laid down several prohibitions against the feast and its abuses in episcopal and other clerical decretals. It was condemned most sharply by Jean-Charlier de Gerson, rector of the Theological Faculty of Paris, in 1400.¹⁵ In more detail and at great length, it was condemned by the same Faculty forty-five years later, through its dean, Eustace de Mesnil.¹⁶ But despite ecclesiastical disapproval, the feast was not suppressed: Through the centuries various notices of it appear in church account books. These notices apply both to the ordinary costs of the feast and to the extraordinary costs because of damages done in the churches during its celebration. Originally the feast seems to have been restricted to the subdeacons, but it later included the lower clergy in general.

The Feast of Fools consisted of four different sequences: Procession to the church, the Mass, carnivalesques in the church and finally carnivalesques and theatrical performances outside the

church. It started as solemn and ended as burlesque. Its content was in no way fixed, but varied through the centuries and in the different churches.

Reversals

The regular movements of the ordinary service were violated. The subdeacons left their stalls. They ran and jumped in the churchhouse, and danced round the altar. In Antibes, in the church of the Franciscans, the lay-brothers held their books upside-down, wore spectacles of orange peels, and blew ashes from the censers upon each others.¹⁷ According to the Faculty of Paris it was censed with the soles of old shoes, and they played dice at the altar. It is reported from Beauvais that there was a drinking-bout in the porch, before the ass was let in: The priests were seen with bottles and glasses in their hands.¹⁸

Masks and monstrous visages (*larvae et personae*) recur in the sources. The participants grimaced and made contortions. They used unclerical costumes like female clothes and clothes of panders and minstrels. They had flowers in their hair¹⁹ and sometimes they appeared with their clothes inside out. There were even accusations of priests appearing naked.²⁰

During the feast they distorted the words and the songs of the liturgy; primarily in the form of *proses et farsurae*, additional chants or interpolations into the text, varying from being harmless to being directly improper. Wanton songs (*cantilenas inhonestas*) are also mentioned.²¹ Both the answers of the celebrant and the people were sometimes changed to braying (see below). The priests are at different times and places accused of dissonant singing, of gibberish, of shouting, hissing, howling, cackling and jeering. At St. Omer the whole office was recited at the loudest pitch of the voice and with howls.²²

The feast is characterized by its *reversals*. *Reversal* designates all types of opposite or contrary behaviour. The reversals represent transformations from human to animal, from male to female, and from spirit to body. They are interrelated and refer to each other in a running transition from form to lack of form. The special meaning of this process of deformation is created on the basis of the Catholic religious system.

The use of masks during the feast was condemned. A mask hides the individual and makes him appear different. Probably both animal masks and monstrous masks were used.²³ Their significance appears in contrast to the uniqueness of man insisted upon in Christian anthropology: Man stands in the middle position between God and animal, but he is essentially different from both. In the feast the religious process of transcending the biological nature and making it spiritual is reversed. Biological man appears monstrous and like an animal. In a similar way the structured liturgy is deconstructed and appears transformed to gibberish and animal noises. The movement from man to God is substituted by a movement from man to animal.

The use of female clothes is also significant. The Catholic hierarchy is a male hierarchy. The vestments of the priests are a main expression of their status. They transform natural man and signify his aim at transcendence. When the priests change their vestment for female clothes, a comical contrast is made between hierarchy and lack of hierarchy, between the spiritual and the physical, and between soul and body. In this connection the female appears as an unstructured opposite. She is conceived of as representing disorder, nature and the body.²⁴ The priestly vestments refer to the Catholic ideology, including its ideal of celibacy. The female clothes, on the contrary, combined with the clothes of panders and minstrels, have sexual connotations. This is further accentuated by the use of wanton songs. Especially in a male society with the ideal of celibacy, the erotic nature of the female and her role as a temptress is stressed. The contrast between male and female is therefore a contrast between asceticism and eroticism, which is an important aspect of the contrast between soul and body in Christian ideology.

The sensory level, connected with the body, is without doubt one of the most important features of the feast. An illustration of this point is the censuring with old shoes. The early fathers had forbidden incense in churches. But from the ninth century it was applied for the dedication and consecration of the altar. Incense serves a double purpose, it gives a pleasant smell and simultaneously drowns the smell of human bodies. The sweet fragrance points to a higher, unbodily reality.²⁵ Censuring with old shoes, on the contrary, brings, in condensed form, a stench of human bodies.

The focusing on the body also has a social reference. The underlying unity of the world consists of all things and beings being made of matter. The material body is man's vehicle for being in the world: It is the basic means for communication between human beings and for all types of interaction. The body as a structured whole is identical with other human bodies, and accordingly there exists an anonymous identity between human beings on this level. The bodily level is the least individualized. One characteristic of feast and carnival is that the body and its functions are focused upon and become prominent.²⁶ The group created by feast and carnival is based on equality and not on status; it is close and egalitarian. The participants refer especially to bodily symbols, and obviously, in the words of Victor Turner (with reference to Rabelais and James Joyce), prefer to "live on the level of 'soulless' signifiers, in reaction to a surfeit of 'bodiless' meanings".²⁷ There is accordingly a close correspondence between the type of social group and its preference for bodily symbols and sensory displays. In the Catholic hierarchy, the subdeacons were the *lowest* group. It was always the *lowest* priests who participated in the feast. They identified with the bodily level opposed to that of soul and spirit, as associated with the higher priests. Accordingly, the religious polarity of soul and body is applied to the feast to describe the opposition between the high and the low in the priestly hierarchy.²⁸

The keynote of the feast was introduced for the first time in the Magnificat sung at Vespers. It sounded in the proclamation that the mighty were cast down from their seats and the low ones were exalted. This was the moment when the ceremonial staff (*baculus*), and probably a cope, were handed over to the leader of the subdeacons.²⁹ The staff and the cope are the old symbols of power, and marked the authority of him who now presided as the *dominus festi* (in Sens called Bachularius), and also the priority of his group, the subdeacons or lower clergy. In the detailed letter from the Theological Faculty of Paris it is also stated that "bishops" or "archbishops" of Fools were chosen during the feast, in churches under pontifical jurisdiction even a pope.³⁰ It is a recurring trait of the feast that ecclesiastical titles were used.³¹ It is further said that the "bishops" and "archbishops" "wear mitres and pastoral staffs, and have crosses borne before them, as if they were on visita-

tion''.³² They aped the duties of the clergy in performing the divine service and in giving benediction to the people.³³ This letter also mentions changes in clothes between the clergy and the laity.³⁴

“The ruling idea of the feast is the inversion of status, and the performance, inevitably burlesque, by the inferior clergy of functions properly belonging to their betters’’.³⁵ As the lowest in the hierarchy were exalted, their behaviour was simultaneously characterized by the typical ludicrous reversals of clowns. Therefore the priests were not playing the part of real ecclesiastical authorities, but of ecclesiastical authorities playing clowns. In Troyes there was held a burlesque over “the holy mystery of the pontificale consecration’’.³⁶ According to the regulations laid down for the feast in Sens (1444), not more than three buckets of water at most must be poured over the *precentor stultorum* at Vespers.³⁷

The reversals of social roles and biological categories are experienced as ludicrous. The ludicrous effect is obtained because mutually exclusive meanings are brought together in one sign and because the reversals create a paradox between real/apparent: The lower clergy played bishops. When they played bishops they were experienced (and experienced themselves) both as subdeacons in reality and as bishops in appearance at the same time. In addition these “bishops” behaved like clowns. When the lower clergy used animal masks and made animal noises they were human beings playing animals. They were simultaneously men and animals. The experience wavered continually between opposite meanings and between reality and appearance. The reversals strengthened each other and heightened the experience of both actors and spectators. (It must be added that the roles of actors and spectators were in flux and cannot be kept strictly apart).

It is of great importance to emphasize that reversals are ambiguous. It is always possible to make different reversals of one act.³⁸ The opposite of talking can both be silence and gibberish. The opposite of eating can both be fasting and gluttony. In the Feast of Fools, the reversals aimed at deformation and incontinence, and they contrasted both the ordinary ritual practice within the Catholic Church and other types of reversals within the same Church. The highest religious ideal of the Medieval church, the *vita angelica*, and the carnivalesque life are both reversals in rela-

tion to ordinary churchly life and therefore inversions of each other.

There is an inherent tension in Christian religion, in the immanence-transcendence dichotomy, which corresponds to a symbolic opposition between incontinence and continence. The logic behind this opposition is that when the body is closed to the world and does not let the world stream through it, the soul can be opened up to God. In this light it is explicable why for instance, centuries earlier, the Church Fathers pointed out that it was not appropriate for virgins to laugh.³⁹ According to Jerome, a virgin should “be like the ark of the covenant and contain nothing but the tablets of God’s law”.⁴⁰ The virgin-state, the ark of the covenant and the prohibition against laughter signaled impenetrability and continence. Closure towards the world meant opening up to God, and the reverse: Opening up to the world means closure of the soul towards God. Accordingly, in a Christian connection, body and soul stood in an inverse relationship. Reversals in the shape of closures were found in ascetic movements, while reversals in the shape of openings up can be found in carnivals and clowning. The reversals of closure were typical for the eremitic movements and the new monastic orders which arose parallel with the flourishing of the Feast of Fools.⁴¹ In them the movement from immanence to transcendence was supported and strengthened. They pursued the *vita contemplativa* to the general benefit of the Church. The tension between immanence and transcendence is also present within the contemplative life and in the monasteries. The necessity of *apotaxis*, flight from the world, led to the establishment of the *vita angelica* as an ultimately elevated type of life. The Cartusian order, dedicated to silence, was founded in the eleventh century. The Cartusian order is an extreme case of *apotaxis*. It confirms the general tendency of continence, effectuated by means of celibacy, fasting and severe restrictions on communication, which are all reversals aiming at maximising closure towards the world.⁴²

In the Feast of Fools the opposite course was taken. The feast was celebrated as an opening up to the sensory world. This was explicitly reflected in the participants’ own apology for feasting, referred to in the letter from the Theological Faculty of Paris: Feasting is necessary because “foolishness, which is our second nature and seems to be inherent in man, might freely spend itself

at least once a year. Wine barrels burst if from time to time we do not open them and let in some air''.⁴³ Men were likened to barrels, containers in which the wisdom of God fermented like wine. But according to the feasting priests, the process of transformation was too violent to sustain without any opening up to the carnal world through carnivalesque life.

Our analysis so far reveals that the symbols and acts of the feast refer simultaneously to three spheres: The human body as a structured system, the Catholic priestly hierarchy and the Catholic religious system. Several structural opposites can be detected. Besides the polarities continence/incontinence and form/lack of form, the most important are the polarities between high/low, man/animal, male/female and soul/body. Some of the polarities are extremes in different continua. They all relate directly or indirectly to the human body. The opposites refer to the contrast between Church and carnival and to the contrast between high and low in the priestly hierarchy.

The juxtaposition of opposite meanings and of meaning pertaining to different spheres are seen most clearly in the use of symbols. Religious carnivals both make fun of traditional symbols and invent their own ludicrous symbols. The symbols hold together the different meanings of the carnival and are therefore especially informative. We will concentrate upon the perversion of the old core-symbol of the Catholic Church, the Lord's Supper, and the invention of a new core-symbol for the Feast of Fools, the Ass.

The Lord's Supper: Reversal and Deformation

In 1400 Gerson, rector of the University of Paris, wrote about the feast: "a detestable mockery is made of the service of the Lord and of the sacraments, where things are impudently and execrably done which shold be done only in taverns and brothels, or among Saracens and Jews".⁴⁴ The Theological Faculty of Paris especially forbade eating, drinking and dancing around the altar when the Mass was celebrated. Both in the letter from the Theological Faculty and in one of the descriptions from Beauvais, the participants of the feast were accused of using black pudding during the Mass. The letter says that priests and clerks "eat black pud-

dings (*offas pingues*) at the horn of the altar while the celebrant is saying Mass''.⁴⁵ According to the manuscript from Beauvais, on the day of the feast, there was "censing with pudding and sausage" (*incensabitur cum boudino et saucisa*).⁴⁶

The significance of the use of blood pudding and sausage in the feast is dependent on the significance of the Eucharist in the ordinary Roman Mass. The Eucharist had developed into a core-symbol for the Catholic Church. The different religious groups related themselves (or were related) to the symbol of the Eucharist. In the case of groups as for instance the Cathars, the mystics, those accused of Satanism, the priestly fools etc., the wine and the bread as the blood and flesh of Christ were used to describe theological and social positions vis-à-vis the Church. These different theological positions are only explicable on the assumption that the biological body is used as a symbol for the social body.⁴⁷

The main cultic act of the Catholic Church was the Mass. At the great feasts of the Church it had developed into a great dramatical performance centering around the consecration of the bread and the wine as the body and blood of Christ. The Mass had developed its form and content in the tenth century, but its ceremony was considerably extended in the twelfth and thirteenth century.⁴⁸ A celebrant made the consecration and accomplished the sacrificial act. At well-appointed churches he was accompanied by the deacon and the subdeacon and by several other officiants. The significance of the Eucharist had changed. In earlier times it had primarily been a meal expressing the unity of the Church and the community of its members. With the development of the liturgy of the Mass, the cult of the Church focused to a higher degree upon the Eucharist at the cost of other elements. The result was twofold: It both contributed to support a powerful priestly hierarchy within the Church and to kindle the personal devotion of the individual.⁴⁹

As for the priests, they were ordained for the *corpus Christi*, the Pauline designation for the Church. From the twelfth century, the *corpus Christi* referred to the eucharistic body of Christ. This clearly underlined the increased stress on the cultic role of the priest and the identifications between priest, sacrament and Christ.⁵⁰ At the same time representations of the tortured Christ had become prominent and the believers showed great preoccupations with his suffer-

ings.⁵¹ The Eucharist thus expresses a paradox in twelfth and thirteenth century religion: On the one hand almost a “divinization” of the priest as the sole person who could administer the Eucharist, on the other hand the stress on the humanity of God in the suffering of Christ.⁵² In this way strong emotive forces were let loose and connected with strong ideological interests.

Simultaneously the theology of the Eucharist developed considerably. Spiritual interpretations were not favoured when the material and sensory foundations of the Eucharist were diminished. For instance Berengar of Tours was twice brought before papal synodes because he claimed that the change in the bread and the wine appeared on the spiritual level only. Both in 1059 and 1079 he had to state before the synodes the identity between the bread and the wine and the true body and blood of Jesus. Pious stories flourished about the bread and the wine transformed in the Mass to real flesh and blood, and about the supernatural powers inherent in the Eucharist. The adoration of the Host was important. Its highest expression was in the feast of the Corpus Christi, instituted in 1264. The Church started to use the technical term *transsubstantiation* for the change of the bread and the wine.⁵³ By *transsubstantiation* is meant that the substance of the bread and the wine in the Mass has changed to the substance of the body and blood of Christ.⁵⁴ This change implies a hierarchical development from the material to the spiritual and reflects the movement from earthly life to spiritual perfection. The Augustinian dualistic pattern had gradually been confronted with an alternative pattern where the material and the spiritual are seen in hierarchical fashion.⁵⁵

The corporeal conception of holiness is illustrated *in extremis* by the veneration of the relics of the saints. The veneration took peculiar forms, as for instance when the monks of Fossanuova “after Saint Thomas Aquinas had died in their monastery, in their fear of losing the relic, did not shrink from decapitating, boiling, and preserving the body”.⁵⁶

The belief in material vehicles as instruments for spiritual salvation is connected with the doctrine of the Church being the sole administer of salvation. The believer is both a member of the Christian society on earth and, as an individual, a potential member of the Kingdom of God to come. The first is a precondition for the

second. The theology of the Eucharist reflects both the social and the soteriological dimension of man, and shows the dependence of the individual on society. The superior Catholic view, that spirit works through matter, can be viewed in the light of Mary Douglas' thesis that "any emphasis on the necessity to mingle spirit and matter implies that the individual is by nature subordinate to society and finds his freedom within its forms. This view is prepared to sacralise flesh, while their opponents count it as blasphemy to teach the physical union of godhead and manhood".⁵⁷ According to Mary Douglas, the human body is at the same time both a body and an image of the society. Therefore the theological controversies about the relationship between body and soul also reflect conflicts about the Church and its relation to the individual represented by his subgroup.⁵⁸ Divergencies in the view of the Eucharist are in this perspective not arbitrary, but dependent on corresponding divergent social experiences. The different experiences and their corresponding symbols are part of a total social, historical and symbolic universe. They are dependent on each other and comprehensible in relation to each other. The Fools' mockery shares in this totality.

Opposed to the Catholic view the Cathars rejected both the superiority of the papal Church and the giving of the Eucharist by the priests. They were dualists, and according to them, salvation was spiritual and did not operate through material vehicles.⁵⁹ The Catholic Church persecuted them ruthlessly: Their apostasy was punished severely on their very bodies—the torturing of the individual body being the most important means through which the great body of the Church made itself symbolically and factually present for heretic groups.

Clearly within "the body" of the Church, but individualistic in their religious quest, were the mystics. They cultivated the spiritual life, but with strong undercurrents of sensory images. Caroline W. Bynum argues "that images of food and drink, of brimming fountains and streams of blood, which are used with special intensity by thirteenth century women, express desire for direct, almost physical contact with Christ in the Eucharist and for power to handle this Christ as only the priest is authorized to do".⁶⁰ The image of Christ who feeds the soul on his blood is enriched by "the image of the

nursing mother whose milk is her blood, offered to the child''.⁶¹ The sensory-biological level of the Eucharist seems to be especially prominent as a necessary nourishment for the individual mystic experience.

The idea of Satanic groups lived among the people. These groups were collectively feared. Witches were believed to parody the Eucharist and to eat revolting substances.⁶² They were conceived of as orgiastic and child-devouring. The old pagan idea of the Christian Eucharist as a cannibalistic feast crept to the foreground. The repugnant practices of the witches were connected with an explicit counter-ideology with the devil at its center, and with a defined social group, namely witches. The groups of witches and Jews were often deliberately fused. The Jews, who in a similar way as witches, stood completely outside the Church, were accused of consuming the blood of children in a devilish imitation of the Mass.

If the mingling of spirit and matter, corresponding to the integration between the individual and society, is seen as a middle course, with the elevation of spirit as one extreme, the elevation of the material substance of the symbol must be the other extreme. Such an elevation of matter was clearly seen both in the Eucharist of the Satanic Mass and in the Eucharist of the subdeacons, although in different ways. In both the Satanic Mass and in the Feast of Fools the disguise of the symbol had disappeared: It became in one case terrible and disgusting, in the other ludicrous and improper. It was dangerous when the symbol of the Eucharist was parodied in a counter-ideology, comic when it was stripped of both ideological and sensory meanings.

In the Feast of Fools, the symbol of the Eucharist was taken at its literal value: Its primary sensory meaning, that of being flesh and blood, was identified with its substance, the pudding and sausage made of animal flesh and blood. But the participants did not create a counter-ideology, they only distorted and nullified the existent ideology. Correspondingly they created a close and egalitarian group and clearly identified themselves with the bodily level. Simultaneously it implied a distortion and nullification of the priestly hierarchy, identified with spiritual being.

Of special interest is the distortion of the symbol of blood. As a "natural" symbol blood is one of the universal symbols of man.

Blood is both a lifegiving substance and a token of death, it is at the same time both attractive and repulsive. It is often dangerous. The blood of the members of the same community in particular is universally protected by taboo.⁶³ Ritual clowns in various cultures often manipulate blood. In this way they violate the taboo on contact with blood.⁶⁴ The power and fascination of the clown is grounded precisely in his breaking of taboos. On the basis of their common preoccupation with blood, the subdeacons could be compared with ritual clowns in other cultures. However, the comparison is on this point not fortunate because it conceals a difference: The ritual clowns used fresh blood or substances which could be compared with blood, such as those connected with the human body and which were in a "natural" state. Laura Makarius refers to the use of menstrual blood as the medicine of clowns and says: "In other cases, the clown is associated not with menstrual blood, but with substances symbolising blood, such as snot, saliva or mud; or related to menstrual blood, like urine or the pubic hair of women; or symbolising matter associated with menstrual blood such as dirty water or dilute coffee".⁶⁵ The participants in the Feast of Fools, on the contrary, used blood which was prepared, cooked and made into food. The blood's character of otherness had disappeared, it had become harmless and unexciting rather than terrible and dangerous. The same holds for the sausage made of flesh, likewise ground and cooked. In both cases the symbolic potential of the ingredients was deformed. The symbol was moved from its Christian context of symbolic interpretation into two other contexts, one culinary and the other zoological.⁶⁶ The confrontation of different semantic universes created the comic effect. Concerning the culinary context, it is important to stress that pudding and sausage belong to a special type of food where the ingredients have completely lost their original form, they have in a way been deformed. In this connection one can also note the interesting secondary meanings of the term used for pudding: *Offa* means also "mass" or "lump" which corresponds (in the culinary sphere) to the original meaning of clown which is "clod", "clot" or "lump".⁶⁷ It must further be noted that even if the Eucharist is a common meal, its nutritious character has been transferred to the spiritual level; it will satisfy the spiritual hunger, but hardly the carnal. This

is reversed in the Feast of Fools; the satisfaction was now carnal.

As for the zoological context, there is a marked opposition between blood/wine/Jesus/human/God on the one hand, and blood/pudding/animal on the other.⁶⁸ The opposition between God and animal, with man as the middle course, was one of the recurring themes of the Feast. It is clearly seen in several of the reversals, and has its apotheosis in the elevation of the Ass.

In the use of the eucharistic symbols there is a double operation: At the same moment as the symbol was reversed and stress was laid on its sensory foundation (blood and flesh), this foundation, because of symbolic deformation, was rendered harmless: Flesh and blood appeared in a formless state as sausage and pudding. The ludicrous effect was obtained because of the contrast between the elaborated sensory and ideological values of the Catholic symbols and the new values created through their deformation.

The Ass: Reversal and Elevation

The role of the Ass has repeatedly been discussed by scholars over the last centuries.⁶⁹ The so-called ‘Prose of the Ass’ exists in several manuscripts and its use is documented in Bourges, Beauvais and Sens as part of the Officium of the day of the feast. According to the liturgy of Beauvais both the celebrant and the congregation were braying. Whether an ass really was led into the Church or whether the animal was left standing outside the door of the Church is not clear.⁷⁰ However, its use as a symbol for the feast is established with certainty. In Sens the feast was in the thirteenth century called *asinaria festa*, and it is as a symbol for the feast that the Ass is interesting in this connection.

Two questions are important, the historical and the hermeneutical: What is the origin of the use of the Ass as a symbol in the Mass and what is its meaning?

There are three possible origins or combinations of origins: The first is that the Ass is a transmutation of the Cervulus, the little hind or little deer, which was part of early Christian or pagan festival games.⁷¹ The second is that it has its roots in a tradition expressed in Pagan and Gnostic sources between 300 B.C. and 300 A.D., according to which Jews and later Christians worshipped an Ass,

the head of an Ass or a man with the head of an Ass as their God.⁷² The third, and the most likely possibility, is that it originally was a pure Biblical animal. Nothing in the source-material, for instance the description and reference in the “prose of the Ass”, suggests mythological traits which are not consistent with a Biblical Ass. This conforms further with its close relation to ceremonies in the churches and not with celebrations in the streets or in the marketplaces.

The use of the Ass must be interpreted in the light of its occurrences in the Old and the New Testament, in relation to contemporary iconographical occurrences and to occurrences in churchly processions. (These different occurrences are naturally interrelated and dependent on each other). The two most applied Biblical references are those of the prophetic Ass of Bileam in the Old Testament and of the Ass on which Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9,9: “Rejoice, rejoice, daughter of Zion, shout aloud, daughter of Jerusalem; for see, your king is coming to you, his cause won, his victory gained, humble and mounted on an ass, a foal, the young of a she-ass”.⁷³ In iconography the Ass is further represented in the Flight to Egypt,⁷⁴ and at the crib of Jesus.⁷⁵ In churchly processions the Ass was frequently used, especially acting out the part of the Ass of Bileam and that of the Ass who carried the virgin and child to Egypt.⁷⁶

Characteristic for the Biblical asses are conclusively that they are peaceful animals with the Prince of Peace as their common denominator. They are actors at important moments in the salvation history, but their parts are subordinate.

In the Feast of Fools the situation is suddenly turned upside down: The Ass has moved to the foreground and may even for a time play the main part. The accentuating of the Ass implies a reversal of “figure” and “ground”. In Christian mythology the Ass is part of the “ground”, the context. When it appears in focus, it becomes “figure”.⁷⁷ But when the Ass becomes “figure”, its new position instantly affects the relationship between the other elements in the ideology of which it is part. In all ideological systems accentuation of one minor element changes the hierarchy and may eventually lead to its deconstruction. The elevation of the

Ass implies a temporary change in the ideology and therefore a temporary change in the comprehension of reality dependent on that ideology. A new perspective is created. This perspective—suggestive and implicit, transistory and not lasting—is a jocular perspective. Like all jocular perspectives it is built upon the play on paradoxes, generated by the play on the superior paradox real/unreal.⁷⁸ In this case this perspective may conveniently be called *the perspective of the Ass*.

In the new situation created by the Mass of the lower clergy, the Ass was simultaneously both fitting and extremely unfitting: Fitting only because it had a subordinate part. But suddenly elevated it started to play the leading role, and was thereby unfitting. It was further fitting and unfitting because it was seen at the same time as a Biblical animal and as a natural animal: It was, undoubtedly (and as indicated above), a proper and peaceful Biblical Ass. But it also activates another sphere of symbols which have their connotations outside the Biblical universe. In the different versions of the “Prose of the Ass” the wavering between the Christian mythological sphere of the Ass and the natural sphere of the Ass is obvious and significant.

The “Prose of the Ass” exists in two related versions, one shorter (seven verses) and the other longer (eleven verses).⁷⁹ In both versions, the perspective shifts between the Biblical and natural, but the long version lays more stress upon the natural capacities of the Ass and therefore seems even more ludicrous.⁸⁰ The language alternates between Latin and French, with the most spirited verses in French:

Heigh ho, heigh ho, heigh ho, heigh	Hez va hez va hez va hez
Fair Sir Ass, you trot all day	Biax (sire asnes) car allez
Fair your mouth, and loud your bray.	Bele bouche car chantez.
	(from the short version)

Heigh, sir Ass, you sing hee-haw,	Hez, sire asnes, car chantez
Your fair mouth's a sulky maw;	Belle bouche rechignez,
You shall have your fill of hay,	Vous aurez du foin assez
Oats enough to cast away.	Et de l'avoine à plantez.
	(from the long version). ⁸

The Ass of the hymn is lively, it is speeding and leaping from its

Oriental origins to its presence in the churches in France. At the same time it is a hard working animal, dragging "long carriages loaded down with baggages". It brings gold, frankincense and myrrh. On the treshing floor its feet separate the chaff from wheat. But it also eats its fill of grass and hay. And it is boisterous with its braying, calling, singing and saying amen.

Both versions of the hymn change between past and present tenses, and between description and address of the Ass. In this way the Ass was made symbolically (and perhaps was also virtually) present, animating its Biblical predecessors. Simultaneously the priest and the congregation aped its braying and thereby made it present as a beast. (In Mosburg the "bishop" was in the 16th century also titulated as *asinorum dominus*).⁸² In a comparable way as the priest in the Mass varied between representing Christ, being an intermediary between God and man, and representing the congregation, the Ass acted both as addressee, was identified with the priest and was identified with the congregation. In the last case the participants' individualities were submerged, and a braying collective emerged. Simultaneously the Ass of the song changed its braying for its repeatedly saying *amen*. Thus the roles of man and animal were intentionally fused. The dominant perspective, *the perspective of the Ass*, involved a continually changing of figure and ground, focus and fringe. Latent in this perspective, even if not explicated, was another sphere of connotations: According to current typologies of animals, the Ass was a stupid animal. It was connected with lust and with the body, regarded as unclean and generally held in low estimation. These comprehensions are not rooted in Christian mythology, but have their origin in the sphere of assumed natural characteristics and capacities of animals.⁸³

Three levels are thus discernible in the symbol of the Ass: The explicit level of Biblical mythology; the explicit level of zoology; and the implicit level of zoopsychology. They are applied in the context of the Catholic Mass, and accordingly new connotations are created through cross-references between the three levels.

Primarily the Ass referred to the subdeacons: The Ass is a domesticated animal and ruled over as the subdeacons were ruled over. In the same way as the subdeacons were low in the churchly hierarchy, the Ass is low in the zoological hierarchy. Further, the

Ass' being a stupid animal corresponds to the feast's being a feast of fools. Nevertheless, the Ass was elevated in the Mass, as the subdeacons elevated themselves. But their elevation was the paradoxical elevation of lowness still being low, not of lowness becoming highness.

The elevation of the Ass again activates the polarity in Christianity between man and beast. Universally man defines his role in contrast to and in interplay with other beings. They are both similar and dissimilar to him, and the contemplation of animals is necessary for the understanding of himself as a species.⁸⁴ Christianity is an anthropocentric religion: Man is seen as superior to other living beings and shall legally rule over them as their steward. Man is made in the image of God, but never on the same level as Him. In this way man is fundamentally different both from God and from other animals. But in man there is a tension between a transition directed towards God and a transition from God facing downwards. This tension makes man a mediator between two poles of being, *theos* and *zoos*, and reflects the duality of Christian anthropology. It is a tension between the angelic and the bestial natures of man, often interpreted as a tension between man's soul and body.

The Ass is both bestial and sometimes explicitly identified with the body. Its elevation is therefore the elevation of the beast and the body over Christ, the god/man, and over the psychical level of being. However, when the bodily and the bestial are elevated, they become "figures" in the context of the Catholic Mass, and thereby this context is changed. In the new context, the Ass develops connotations of otherness.

Animals are often conceived of as having supernormal powers, and they therefore refer to another dimension of being. Bileam's Ass is an example of an animal with such powers. But it is not likely that it is the Bileam story which is the main source of the Otherness of the Ass. Rather the Ass has moved from its Christian instrumental position of object and has become subject. And when the Ass has become subject man becomes object because the participants of the Mass see themselves in the eyes of the Ass as objects.

We suggested that the turning of figure and ground implied a process of deconstruction. The symbol of the Ass further signified

a deformation of the deconstructed elements: The Ass referred to the bodily and the beastly in contrast to the psychic and the ideological. Therefore the elevation of the Ass meant a continual deformation of context. In spite of its peaceful Biblical origin, the Ass paradoxically exposed a chaotic dimension of being. It represented a movement from the spiritual to the carnal, from the ideological to the sensorian. The Ass was a condensation of the ludicrous happenings during the Feast of Fools, and can therefore be described as an extremely fitting core-symbol.

Victor Turner's structural model of symbols is an aid to the understanding of the process of carnival. According to his model a living symbol has both a sensory and an ideological pole with different clusters of meanings. These poles affirm and strengthen each other. In ludic and liminal situations it is rather the sensory meanings of symbols which are stressed at the cost of, and partly in opposition to, their ideological meanings. The sensory pole produces new and different meanings, especially with reference to the symbol's material basis. But these altered meanings simultaneously contribute to the creation of a new, but weak and unstable ideological pole.⁸⁵

The ludicrous effect was produced because the changed symbol was conceived against the background of the old established symbol (The Lord's Supper). This change in one symbol is accompanied by a fundamental disturbance in the structural balance between the different symbols: Peripheral symbols move from the fringe into the focus, establishing a new focus over against the old one (The Ass). Elements in the ideology are played out against each other and deconstruct each other (The low ones exalt themselves and play clowns). The different operations create deformations both on the syntactic and the semantic levels. They give rise to rich and complicated interplays between the old stable ideological and hierarchical systems and the new unstable inventions. The more rich and complicated, probably the more fun.

The process of deformation is typical for the Feast of Fools. It is seen in the individual symbols, for instance in the increased stress on sensory meanings at the cost of ideological meanings. It is seen in the fragmentation of the superior ideological system. It is seen in the reverse behaviour of the individuals and in the reversals of

the social system. And it is seen on the topological level: The Feast started within the ordinary service of the Mass, continued with carnivalesque celebrations within the church, diffused into the street, market-places and theatres in the town, and ended probably with the participants drunk and soundly asleep.

Why was the feast held and what functions did it have?

We will return to the minor priests' own apology for feasting. They emphasized (with the parable of the wine-barrels), the necessity of opening up and letting in air unless they should burst. In other words they advocated a pre-Freudian "blowing-off-steam"-theory. This theory presupposes man's bestial nature which must be repressed for the sake of perfecting the soul. Freud advocated an elaborated variant of the theory (not in principle different from that of the minor priests), and his theory has been applied on ritual clowns with the conclusion that the function of humour is to permit "the acting out of otherwise strictly prohibited regressive, infantile-sexual, and aggressive behaviour".^{86 87} If we are to believe the participants (and we have no reason to doubt them), psychological tension was reduced during the feast. This reduction of tension had psychological, subjective effects. It was, however, caused by an objective, collective cause, the manipulating of the religious and the social systems. This manipulating had a direct effect on one group, the minor priests, and an indirect effect on other groups, for instance the superior priests, the bishops, the Theological Faculty and the common people.

We suggest that an important motive power of the feast was the above mentioned religious and social conflict between the egalitarian *vita apostolica* and the life within the hierarchical papal Church. This conflict was expressed both through the banning of heretical groups living a simple Christian life, but also through incorporating other groups who realized the *vita apostolica*, but who were not in pronounced opposition to the papal Church. The conflict was expressed in the Feast of Fools, but also in the similar Feast of the Boy Bishop, usually held on the Eve of the Holy Innocents Day.⁸⁸ The Feast of the Boy Bishop had several characteristics in common with the Feast of Fools: A boy was chosen as bishop and

leader for the other boys. He performed all the duties of the priest, except in the Mass, and was treated as a bishop of the others as long as the feast lasted. The superior priests had to play the roles of the minor priests. This feast seems not to have led to excesses in the same way as the Feast of Fools, and it was therefore not regarded as threatening and provoking to the same degree as the latter.⁸⁹ But its existence bears witness to the same theme of exalting the low in the social system. Both feasts made the conflict visible and, perhaps, by playing it out, for a while reduced the tension in the society, and thereby, reinforced the norms of that society.⁹⁰

However, neither the conflict in the Church, between the social system and the religious ideology, nor the need for “blowing-off-steam” (psychologically or socially) are more than partial explanations. While these theories stress functional and purpose-related aspects of the feast, they fall short of explaining its playful character. The Feast of Fools was not primarily celebrated for any exterior purpose, it was celebrated for its own sake. The feast was optional from the point of view of the participants, not obligatory from the point of view of the society.⁹¹ On the contrary, the Church did its best to reform or repress it. In this connection it is necessary to stress the distinction between work and play, and especially between the different frames of motivation characteristic for these types of behaviour. Any theory which aims at explaining the feast must take these distinctions into consideration. It is useful to introduce the terms *telic* and *paratelic*. These terms are applied by Michael Apter to discriminate between two different metamotivational frames for human behaviour.⁹² In a telic state the individual is primarily oriented towards a goal, in a paratelic state the individual is not primarily oriented towards a goal. On the contrary, the paratelic state is “a state in which the individual is primarily oriented towards some aspects of his continuing behaviour and its related sensations”.⁹³ The distinction between telic and paratelic is related to the distinction between work and play, but it applies to motivation, not to behaviour.⁹⁴ A consequence of the distinction between telic and paratelic phenomenological states is that a simplified view of *homeostasis* as the superior desired state must be rejected. The “blowing-off-steam”-hypotheses have homeostasis as their basic premise.

According to this premise all systems strive to reach their equilibrium and there is only one range of values. With two metamotivational frames there is a case of bistability with two ranges of values.⁹⁵ These values pertain either to a telic or to a paratelic system. The introduction of a paratelic system and the rejection of the concept of *homeostasis* implies therefore a rejection of simplified “blowing-off-steam”-hypotheses, be they psychological or sociological. The inclusion of the component of motivation further counteracts cognitive explanations with stress on didactic functions.⁹⁶

The minor priests held their feast primarily for the fun of doing it. And they derived not a little part of their amusement from ludicrous deformations of the Mass. The function of these deformations was not so much to release tension as it was to create arousal in the participants. The superior aim was to enjoy the experience and attempt to make it as intense as possible. One main source of arousal is the use of paradoxes. Contrary meanings in relation to persons, places, things or situations increase the intensity of the experience and are received with amusement in a playful state of mind.⁹⁷ It is fruitful to translate the parable of the wine-barrels from its telic context to a new paratelic context. Let us for a moment think of the barrels instead as balloons filled with gas: When a child opens up a balloon and lets it go, it will flow into the air, rush about hither and thither until no gas is left and it collapses on the ground in a shrunk and deformed state. The movement of the feast, whirling and violent, from form to lack of form can be illustrated with the flight of this balloon: It is the gas within the balloon which is the fuel making the flight possible. In like manner the feast released tension in the way that it used the tension in the religious system to create arousal in the participants. It is as if the energy which kept the elements of the religious system together was let loose, increased and spent.⁹⁸ Superior in these carnivalesque interplays between the religious and the ludicrous was the dynamic movement from form to lack of form. This movement, constituted by reversals, was the prime characteristic of the Feast of Fools.

¹ In Jacques-Paul Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completus* (Series Latina), vol. 207, (1855), pp. 1169-1176. Translation in E.K. Chambers, *The Mediaeval Stage*, vol. I, London, 1954 (orig. 1903), p. 294.

² The feast is also called *festum follorum*, *festum stultorum*, (the Feast of Fools), *festum subdiaconorum*, (the Feast of the Subdeacons) and *festum baculi* (the Feast of the Rod.). Cf. Chambers, p. 275.

³ Carnival in the narrowest sense is a designation for the festivities in the half-week before Lent. In the present investigation it is used to designate festivities characterized by wearing of masks, status-reversals and riotous revelry.

⁴ This is in disagreement especially with Mikhail Bakhtin. He says about the carnival forms parodying the Church's cult: "All these forms are systematically placed outside the Church and religiosity. They belong to an entirely different sphere." In *Rabelais and his World*, Camb. (Massachu.) and London, 1968, p. 7.

⁵ See E. Louis Backman, *Religious Dances in the Christian Church and in Popular Medicine*, Connecticut, 1977 (orig. 1952), pp. 50-64; G.M. Dreves, "Zur Geschichte der fête des fous", *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach*, Freiburg, 1894, vol. 47, pp. 571-587; Chambers, pp. 274-335. This was also the type of approach pursued by the Church.

⁶ See especially Bakhtin 1968; Barbara Swain, *Fools and Folly during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, N.Y., 1932; Paul Lehman, *Die Parodie im Mittelalter*, Stuttgart, 1963; Anton C. Zijderveld, *Reality in a Looking-Glass: Rationality through an Analysis of Traditional Folly*, London, 1982, p. 41-91.

⁷ John G. Bourke, "The Feast of Fools in Europe", *Scatologic Rites of All Nations*, N.Y., 1968 (orig. 1891), pp. 11-23; Zijderveld pursues the same line of thought. In general in anthropological articles on clowns the Feast of Fools is often used as an example.

⁸ See Charles Du Fresne Du Cange, *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis*, Graz-Austria, 1954 (orig. 1883-87), "Kalendae", p. 481.

⁹ Chambers quotes the relevant passages of the Latin text, pp. 277-278.

¹⁰ In G.M. Dreves, *Analecta Hymnica Medii Aevi*, XX, N.Y., 1961, (orig. 1886-1922), pp. 217-229.

¹¹ The hymn of the Ass exists in two related versions (cf. note 79).

¹² Cf. Chambers, pp. 284-288. See Dreves, *Analecta*, pp. 229-232; Henry C. Greene, "The song of the Ass", *Speculum. A Journal of Mediaeval Studies*, VI, (1931), pp. 534-549; and Du Cange, "Festum", p. 461.

¹³ For a description, see Du Cange, "Festum", pp. 460-461.

¹⁴ Chambers, p. 287.

¹⁵ Chambers, pp. 292-293.

¹⁶ In Migne, pp. 1169-1176; Cf. Chambers, pp. 293-295.

¹⁷ Chambers, p. 317.

¹⁸ *Officium* from Beauvais. See Chambers, pp. 284-287.

¹⁹ The flowers are especially mentioned by Odo, Cardinal of Tusculum, in a letter written to the chapter of Sens in 1245. Chambers, pp. 288-289.

²⁰ Chambers, p. 317.

²¹ Chants and interpolations were allowed, but not wanton songs.

²² Chambers, p. 289.

²³ Cf. the letter from the Theological Faculty of Paris.

²⁴ "The misogyny of the later Middle Ages is well known... *Male and female* were contrasted and asymmetrically valued as intellect/body, active/passive, rational/irrational, reason/emotion, self-control/lust, judgement/mercy, and order/disorder", Caroline Walker Bynum, " '... And Women His Humanity':

Female Imagery in the Religious Writing of the Later Middle Ages'', in *Gender and Religion: On the Complexity of Symbols*, eds. C.W. Bynum, S. Harrell and P. Richman, Boston, 1986, p. 257.

²⁵ See "Incense", *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade, N.Y./London, 1987, vol. 7, pp. 161-163.

²⁶ This point is repeatedly stressed by Bakhtin. See especially pp. 18ff.

²⁷ Victor Turner, "Symbolic Studies'', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, vol. 4, (1975), pp. 156-157.

²⁸ In this case the bodily symbolism refers to the lowest members of the priestly hierarchy, and not to "the people" as a grandiose totality. For Bakhtin, the material bodily principle refers primarily to the people: "The material bodily principle is contained not in the biological individual, not in the bourgeois ego, but in the people, a people who are continually growing and renewed" (*op. cit.* p. 19). The Bakhtinian grotesque carnivalesque body related to an egalitarian populism is a superior normative image probably more fruitful in a literary context than as a description of carnival as a social phenomenon (Cf. Dominick La Capra, *Rethinking Intellectual History*, Ithaca and London, 1983, pp. 291-324.). The universal phenomenon of using bodily symbols in carnivals and by clowns must in each case be interpreted in their social and historical context.

²⁹ In the decree from Eudes de Sully, see Chambers, p. 278.

³⁰ Migne, p. 1173.

³¹ Chambers, p. 326 with references.

³² Migne, p. 1173. Chambers, 295.

³³ Migne, p. 1175.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1175.

³⁵ Chambers, p. 325.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 296.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 298.

³⁸ See Edward Norbeck, "Rites of Reversal of North American Indians as Forms of Play'', in *Forms of Play of Native North Americans*, eds. Edward Norbeck and Claire R. Farrer, N.Y., 1979, pp. 51-66.

³⁹ N. Adkin, "The Fathers on Laughter'', *Orpheus*, 6, 1, (1985), pp. 149-52; I.M. Resnick, "'Risus monasticus'. Laughter and Medieval Monastic Culture'', *Revue Bénédictine*, 97 (1987), pp. 90-100.

⁴⁰ Adkin, p. 149.

⁴¹ In the 11th century appear both eremitic movements modelled on the example of Egyptian hermits and monastic orders. They are motivated by dissatisfaction with the existing monastic orders (Carthusians, Premonstratensians, Cistercians etc.).

⁴² See Peter Fuchs, "Die Weltflucht der Mönche. Anmerkungen zur Funktion des monastisch-asketischen Schweigens'', *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, 15, 6, (1986), pp. 393-405; Werner Bergmann, "Das Frühe Mönchtum als Soziale Bewegung'', *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, 37, 1, (1985), pp. 30-59; P. Suso Frank Ofm, *Angelikos Bios. Begriffsanalytische und Begriffsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zum "Engelgleichen Leben" im Frühen Mönchtum*, (Beiträge zur Geschichte des alten Mönchtums und des Benediktinerordens, 26), München, 1964.

⁴³ Quoted from Bakhtin, p. 75.

⁴⁴ Swain, p. 207, note 53.

⁴⁵ *Offa* is a lump of food or cake made of flour. It has the interesting secondary meaning of "mass" or "lump" and even of "abortion". With *pinguis*, "fat", it designates a pudding made of blood.

⁴⁶ "Boudin: mets fait avec un boyau qui ete rempli de sang et de graisses de porc". Emile Littré, *Dictionnaire de la langue française*, Gallimard/Hachette, 1967.

⁴⁷ Cf. Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, N.Y., 1970.

⁴⁸ Cf. Karl Young, *The Drama of the Medieval Church*, Oxford, 1967 (orig. 1933), vol. I, pp. 15-43.

⁴⁹ Cf. Colin Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual, 1050-1200*, London, 1972, pp. 12-13.

⁵⁰ See "Priesthood", *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 11, p. 538.

⁵¹ Morris, pp. 140ff.

⁵² See Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*, London, 1982, p. 19.

⁵³ The term appears in the first half of the twelfth century and becomes usual in the second half of that century.

⁵⁴ A distinction is made between "the substance", which is the changeable nature, and "the accidents", the accidental qualities as smell, taste and appearance, which are *not* changed. On the IVth Lateran council (1215) *transsubstantiation* became the official dogma of the Church. It got its scholastic formulation in the second part of that century by Thomas Aquinas. The Hildebrandian reform reflected in the formula forced upon Berengar of Tours implied that also the *accidentia* were transformed into *substantia*. Cf. Roy Wagner, "The Western Core Symbol", in *Symbols that Stand for Themselves*, Chicago, 1986, pp. 96-125.

⁵⁵ Hundred years earlier Bernhard of Clairvaux (d. 1153) had said, "I think this was the main cause why the invisible God wished to be seen in flesh, and as man converse with men: so as to draw all the affections of fleshly men, who could only love in a fleshly way, to the saving love of his flesh, and thus by stages to lead them to a spiritual love", Morris, p. 153, (Sermo 20 in Cant. V 6, Migne, PL 183, col. 870 B).

⁵⁶ J. Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, Penguin, 1955, (orig. 1924), p. 168.

⁵⁷ Mary Douglas, p. 162.

⁵⁸ Cf. also John G. Gager, "Body-Symbols and Social Reality: Resurrection, Incarnation and Asceticism in Early Christianity", *Religion*, 12, 4, (1982), pp. 345-363.

⁵⁹ See for instance Martin Erbstößer, *Ketzer im Mittelalter*, Stuttgart, 1984; Milan Loos, *Dualist Heresy in the Middle Ages*, Prague, 1974.

⁶⁰ Bynum, 1982, p. 8.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

⁶² See especially Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons: An Enquiry Inspired by the Great Witch-Hunt*, London, 1975.

⁶³ See "Blood", *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 2, pp. 254-256.

⁶⁴ Laura Makarius stresses the role of the clown as one who violates taboo, and especially emphasizes his connection with blood. ("Ritual Clowns and Symbolical Behaviour", *Diogenes*, 1970, pp. 44-73).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁶⁶ The hypothesis that the blood and the sausage must be interpreted in a scatological context was put forward by J.G. Bourke 1968, and repeated by A.J. Zijderfeld 1982. It exemplifies an attempt to interpret the feast in a general comparative context. However, the hypothesis lacks the support of textual evidence.

⁶⁷ Makarius, p. 66, note 85.

⁶⁸ Also flesh/bread/Jesus/human/God opposed to flesh/sausage/animal.

⁶⁹ See especially Backman 1977; Chambers 1954 (Chambers refers to the literature and the discussion in the 18th and 19th century); Greene, pp. 534-549; H. Villetard, "Remarques sur la Fête des Fous au Moyen Age", Paris, 1911, pp. 1-28.

⁷⁰ Especially Villetard refutes that an animal was actually led into the church.

⁷¹ Du Cange points to the pagan festival games called Cervulus or Cervula (p. 481). Backman thinks this feast originated in early Christian circles, not in pagan, and that the roots of the Feast of Fools are to be found there (p. 59). According to the letter from the Theological Faculty of Paris, the feast must be traced to the Roman festivals of the Kalendae (p. 1170).

⁷² See for instance Lukas Vischer, "Le prétendu "Culte de l'âne", *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, 139, (1951), pp. 14-35; Adolf Jacoby, "Der angebliche Eselskult der Juden und Christen", *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, 25, (1927), pp. 265-282.

⁷³ In the canonical gospels the ass does not appear in the native-scene. In two of the apocryphical gospels, however, in the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew and the Gospel of James it is found. The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew had a great influence on the iconography in the Middle Ages. Here it is said: "On the third day after the Birth, Mary went into a stable and put the Child in a manger, and the ox and the ass worshipped it. Here the prophecies of Isaiah and Habakkuk were fulfilled." (Poul Himmer, "Oksen og aeselet i og omkring fødselsfremstillinger", *Iconographisk Post*, 1980, pp. 24-31).

⁷⁴ In the iconography from 5th and 6th century.

⁷⁵ In the iconography at least from the 4th century.

⁷⁶ From Beauvais is described a procession with an ass carrying a young girl with a child in her arms, representing the Flight into Egypt (Du Cange, p. 461); from Rouen there is a description of a procession in the church with all the prophets and with Bileam and his ass (Du Cange, pp. 460-461).

⁷⁷ Cf. especially Gregory Bateson, "The Position of Humor in Human Communication", *Cybernetics*, N.Y., 1953, pp. 1-47; and William F. Fry, *Sweet Madness, A Study of Humor*, California, 1963, pp. 119ff.

⁷⁸ In the words of William F. Fry: "But it is the art of the punch line of the joke to snatch some of this implicit material from the world of Shades and project it into the workaday world or, in other words, into reality", (p. 152). Cf. also Michael J. Apter, *The Experience of Motivation. The Theory of Psychological Reversals*, London, 1982.

⁷⁹ Dreves 1961, pp. 217-232; Chambers, pp. 284-288; Greene, pp. 534-549.

⁸⁰ Chambers, p. 287.

⁸¹ Quoted after Greene, pp. 535-537.

⁸² Chambers, pp. 319-320.

⁸³ See "Esel", *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, Stuttgart, 1966, VI, pp. 564-595.

⁸⁴ Cf. Mary Midgley, *Beast and Man. The Roots of Human Nature*, Hassocks (Sussex), 1979, especially pp. 19ff and p. 35. See also Francis Klingender, *Animals in Art and Thought to the End of the Middle Ages*, London, 1971.

⁸⁵ Cf. Turner 1975, p. 156.

⁸⁶ Jacob Levine, "Regression in Primitive Clowning", *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 30, (1961), p. 82.

⁸⁷ The "blowing-off-steam"-theory is often supplied by another theory, according to which the function of the clown is to bring forbidden thoughts and/or holy

objects within the range of social experience. Cf. John J. Honigsmann, "An Interpretation of the Social-psychological Functions of the Ritual Clown", *Character and Personality, Journal of Personality*, 10, (1942), pp. 220-226; Makarius, pp. 44-71. In a Jungian variant, the purpose is to integrate the hidden and neglected elements of man in an accomplished personality. Cf. Lucile Hoerr Charles, "The Clown's Function", *Journal of American Folklore*, 58, (1964), pp. 25-34.

⁸⁸ Cf. Chambers, pp. 336-371, and A. Lefebvre, *L'Évêque des Fous et la Fête des Innocents à Lille, du XIV^e au XVI^e siècle*, Lille, 1901, pp. 3-12.

⁸⁹ V.A. Kolve says about the Feast of the Boy Bishop that this feast probably never was comic. (*The Play called Corpus Christi*, London, 1966, p. 137).

⁹⁰ Cf. the theories of Max Gluckman about so-called "rituals of rebellion" (*Custom and Conflict in Africa*, Oxford, 1963); Pierre L. Van den Berghe says that carnivalesque license in the closely related fields of stress and authority is subject to definite norms and kept within safe bounds. He stresses the norm-reinforcing function of ritual licence ("Institutionalized Licence and Normative Stability", *Cahiers d'études Africaines*, 3, (1963), pp. 413-423).

⁹¹ Victor Turner, "Liminal to Liminoid, in Play, Flow and Ritual: An Essay in Comparative Symbology", *Rice University Studies*, 60, 3, (1974), pp. 73ff.

⁹² Apter 1982.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-34; 88-106.

⁹⁶ Deformation of symbols and symbolic systems may lead to new constructs, of passing or permanent character, and thus have clearly didactic effects on those adhering to them. In other words, it could start a process of transformation in the participants. This process of transformation would apply both to the symbolic system and to the participants in the way that the result of the process was a transformed symbolic system and participants who in like manner were transformed to participate in the new system. But this is clearly not the case with the Feast of Fools. Its carnivalesque symbols never gave rise to an alternative, permanent ideological system. Another possible function of the feast, likewise pertaining to didactics, is that the symbolic system was torn apart and then reconstructed exactly as it was before. But because of the deconstructions and deformations, the participants were forced to be aware of their ideological systems in new and fresh ways. In the long run this would make them internalize the system better and thus gradually adapt themselves better to their culture. If this was the case, the ludicrous feast had a clearly didactic purpose and served exactly the ideological system it made fun of. In both cases the deformation of the symbolic system would aim at transformation of the participants, either as transformation to a new symbolic system or as an adaption to the old system. The transformative perspective stresses the didactic and cognitive functions created by the incongruities made within the symbols and within the system of symbols. But nothing in the reports from the Feast of Fools indicates that a lasting transformation ever occurred, neither of the symbolic system nor of the participants. There were deformations, but there were no transformations. These deformations clearly acted as cognitive stimuli in the carnivalesque feast, but it is important to connect the deformations of the symbolic system and the reverse behaviour of the participants to their emotional content and functions.

⁹⁷ Apter, pp. 151-153.

⁹⁸ The movement in the Feast of Fools could be compared with a special type of games and play. Roger Caillois divided play and games into four categories

(*Man, Play and Games*, N.Y., 1961 (orig. 1958)). The category labelled *illinx* or vertigo characterizes those forms of play and related activities which by a rapid whirling or falling movement aim at producing a state of dizziness or disorder in the actor. Extended, vertigo is seen in relation to moral order as a desire for destruction and disorder in the individual (pp. 81ff). Vertigo is further expressed in social institutions as carnivals, circuses and travelling fairs (pp. 129ff). In these cases it is combined with one of Caillois' other main types, *mimicry*, which designates imitation, illusion and masking. The combination of *illinx* and *mimicry* is common and similarly characteristic for the Feast of Fools.

BUDDHISM IN TURKISH CENTRAL ASIA

HANS-J. KLIMKEIT

In the middle of the 6th century, the Turks, coming probably from the area of the Altai mountains, made their appearance in the Central Asian steppes.¹ Their religion was marked by a cult of Heaven and Earth and the veneration of ancestors.² It was the Türküt Turks who established what is known as the first Turkish (Türküt) kingdom in a vast region reaching from northwestern China to the area east of Lake Aral. As was the fate of many a kingdom of the steppes, the realm was soon divided into two portions, an eastern and a western one. Bumîn Qayan (d. 552) was regarded as the founder of the whole realm and first ruler of its eastern part, whereas his brother İstâmi ruled the western extension. Although the names of Khans before Bumîn are known, the early Turks regarded him and his brother as the founding fathers of the Turkish state, projecting their rule to mythical *Urzeit*. Thus in the Kül Tigin inscription it says, "When the blue sky above and the reddish-brown earth below were created, between the two human beings were created. Over the human beings, my ancestors Bumîn Qayan and İstâmi Qayan became rulers. After they had become rulers, they organized and ruled the state and institutions of the Turkish people."³ The words are spoken by Bilgä Qayan (716-734), one of the great rulers of the second Turkish empire, established after 680. He praises the wisdom and courage of the first Qayans, mentioning their Chinese and Tibetan connections. But there is no indication of any Buddhist influence. Yet there must have been contacts to representatives of that religion, the situation being different in the western and the eastern part of the first kingdom.

It is very probable that the Western Turks of the first empire already came into contact with Buddhism, for that religion had by this time made inroads into the part of Central Asia they occupied. But we have no evidence of considerable conversions to Buddhism at this period. In so far as later Western Turks are concerned, we

do hear of Buddhist sanctuaries established by Turkish royalty in the area of Kapiśa (Begram).⁴ When the Chinese Buddhist monk Wu-k'ung visited Gandhara between 759 and 764, he found here Buddhist temples, which, as he thinks, were built at the expense of the Turkish kings.⁵ Hsüan-tsang, who passed through Central Asia in 629, does not make any mention of Buddhism among the Western Turks. The Turkish rulers he met adhered to other faiths. But this might be due to the fact that, as von Gabain notes, he was primarily interested in meeting Indian and Chinese Buddhists.⁶ However, we do know that he also had contact with Buddhists belonging to other ethnic groups.

Turning back to the first Turkish kingdom and its western realm, we do not know exactly of its extension to the west and south. Spuler is of the opinion that the Oxus could have been the dividing line between the Western Turks and the Sassanian empire.⁷ But it may also have included portions of what is now Afghanistan, where, as we know, Buddhism was firmly established by the 6th cent.

The Eastern Turks of the first Empire did have contact with Chinese Buddhism. According to Chinese sources, a certain Yü-wen T'ai, the commander-in-chief of the West Wei and the founder of the Northern Chou Dynasty (556-581), had various temples and monasteries erected in Ch'ang-an and other places, apparently for the use of Turks as well as Chinese. He also had a "Turkish Temple" built for the "Great Qaγan of the Turks", i.e. Mu-han (553-572), in Ch'ang-an.⁸ The second successor to Yü-wen T'ai, Ming-ti (556-560), had an inscription made commemorating the founding of that temple. In this inscription there is first a praise of Buddhism as a power ordering the world, and then it says: "The Turk, the great I-ni Wen Mu-han, in summer, turned to the complete foundation [i.e. Buddhism]. That was wholly the work of Heaven."⁹ The inscription then praises the military virtues of Mu-han, whose Turkish army had, indeed, helped the Chou. Finally, the inscription talks about the missionary zeal of Yü-wen T'ai. Whether Mu-han actually did embrace Buddhism, is very doubtful. Most probably this was more wishful thinking on the part of the Chinese. But the fact that a Buddhist temple for Turks was actually built in Ch'ang-an in the 6th cent. shows that a considerable number of

Turks—according to von Gabain about 6000—lived there at this time.

Mu-han's successor and younger brother, Tapar Qayan (T'o-po: 572-581), was apparently even more open to Buddhism. Whether he actually embraced that religion we do not know. Probably he manifested interest in that faith without surrendering his own belief. He did have a Buddhist temple erected in his realm, and he did ask the ruler of Ts'i for Buddhist scriptures. This ruler had the *Nirvāṇa-Sūtra* translated into Turkish for him.¹⁰ The translation was made by a high state official, Shi-Ts'ing. This first translation of a Buddhist text into Turkish must have had to cope with great difficulties, since the language of the Turks had no means of expressing the complicated terminology of Buddhism. Furthermore, the question is, in what script that text was written. It could have been the ancient Runic Turkish script as used in the Orkhon inscriptions, but it seems more possible that it was written in Sogdian script.¹¹

Further evidence of Buddhist influence on the Eastern Turks of the first realm is the fact that a certain Buddhist monk, Jinagupta (ca. 528-605 ?), coming from Kapiśa (Begram in today's Afghanistan) and having spent some time in Ch'ang-an, passed through Turkish area on his way home, together with other monks from his native land. He was invited to stay at the Turkish court of Tapar Qayan where he probably taught the *dharma*. When some Chinese monks, coming from India, arrived with 260 Buddhist scriptures and declined to stay because of the turmoil in Ts'i, their home, they studied and translated these documents into Chinese with Jinagupta.¹² In how far the presence of these monks and their work influenced people at the court, we do not know.

After the end of the first Turkish kingdom which was ushered in by the subjugation of the Eastern Turks to the Chinese, Chinese rule then extended far into Central Asia for about 30 years (650-682). But then the Turks started to reassert themselves. Politically, this reassertation manifested itself in the work of Eltäriš (reg. 682-691). This name is actually a title meaning 'he who collected (the people) of the realm'. According to Chinese sources, he must have had the name Qutluγ (Ku-to-lo). It was he who established a second East Turkish kingdom (682-745), the kingdom of the Kōk-

Turks (Blue or Heavenly Turks).¹³ This state was a nomadic one. Since 680, Turks living in towns and cities and influenced by Chinese culture, started to return to the former way of life. There was something like a national revival with anti-Chinese undertones, as we can see in the Orkhon inscriptions of this period. Especially Qutluγ Qaγan's minister, the "wise Tonyuquq", who was himself raised in China, warned the Turks about too close association with the Chinese, a warning echoed in the so-called Kül Tigin inscription where the Turks are exhorted to turn to their former way of life in the region of the Ötükän mountains of present Mongolia.¹⁴ This warning might also have implied a disassociation from Chinese Buddhism and a return to the native religion with its veneration of Heaven and the Earth Mother Umay. In the Kök-Turkish inscriptions between 692 and 735 there is no trace of Buddhism, although the Turks had been exposed to that religion for several decades. Yet we will see that there must have been contact with Sogdian Buddhists at this time.

The Kök Turkish empire was to last up to the victorious rise of the Turkish Uighurs who became masters of the steppes around 745.¹⁵

The Uighur Empire was founded by a Kül Bilgä Qaγan (reg. 744-747) and it was to last to about 840 when it was overrun by the Kirghiz, causing the Uighurs to flee to the Kansu corridor on the one hand and the oasis towns of the northern Tarim basin on the other, Turfan being the seat of an Uighur kingdom from about 850 to about 1250.

Whereas the Old Turkish Orkhon inscriptions date to the time of the Kök-Turkish and the Uighur realm, the major portion of Turkish Buddhist literature we have stems from the Turfan area, but also from Hami, from Tun-huang and from the area of the "Yellow Turks", i.e. the Turks who had settled in the Kansu corridor. Some of these texts may go back to the time of the Uighur Empire, even though, in 762, Böγü Qaγan (Mo-yu), having come into contact with Manichaeism in China, adopted their faith and made it the official state religion.¹⁶ Yet we have clues to the fact that Buddhism was also prevalent among the Turks of the Mongol steppes before their immigration to the regions mentioned. Firstly, in the Chinese text of the trilingual Karabalgassun inscription,

written in Chinese, Uighur and Sogdian, which informs us about the Uighurs adopting Manichaeism, there is a reference to “carved and painted images of demons” which were to be destroyed, and it cannot be excluded that some of these were Buddhist figures.¹⁷ Secondly, Jens Peter Laut, in his work, *Der frühe türkische Buddhismus und seine literarischen Denkmäler*, has pointed out the role of the Sogdians in the propagation of Buddhism amongst the Turks of the steppes.¹⁸

The major evidence for an early Sogdian Buddhist influence is the inscription of Bugut.¹⁹ It stems from the time of the first Turkish kingdom, to be precise from the early eighties of the 6th cent. The inscription, edited by S.G. Kljaštornyj and V.A. Livšic in 1972, is written on a stele. On three of its sides are Sogdian texts, whereas on the fourth side there is an inscription in Brāhmī letters, probably in the Sanskrit language. Unfortunately, this part is so badly damaged that a successful reading has not been possible up to now. But it is obviously a Buddhist text. In the Sogdian portion there is an admonition where it says: “Establish a great new Saṃgha”.²⁰ The content does not make clear who is speaking and who is addressed. Maybe the order was issued by Tapaṛ Qaγan himself. Whatever the solution is, noteworthy is the fact that we have here an exhortation to establish Buddhism ecclesiastically. The stele itself points to the significance of the Sogdians and their role in the spread of the Buddhist faith in the Mongolian steppes. As is well known, the Sogdians were traders along the silk route, having a whole string of trading posts between Samarkand and China. In the Orkhon inscriptions, we hear that there were also Sogdian colonies amongst the Turks,²¹ a fact already pointed out by Pulleyblank.²² Apparently, the Sogdian script was in use amongst the early Turks, as the inscription of Bugut would suggest. A further developed type of the Sogdian script was used by the Uighurs, the major portion of their literature being written in this script. The early use of Sogdian by the Turks is also substantiated by the Chinese annals of the Northern Ch’ou dynasty (556-581). Here it says: “The script of the T’u-küe is similar to that of the *hu* barbarians.”²³ As Pulleyblank says, the term *hu* at this time refers to Iranian peoples, especially to the Sogdians.²⁴

The political influence of the Sogdians at the court of the Turkish

Qayan in the Mongolian steppes was already highlighted by Pulleyblank who assumes that their influence extended into nomadic regions.²⁵ The presence of Sogdians among the Turks irritated the Chinese. In a Chinese document from the 7th cent., it says: "The T'u-küe [Turks] are actually simple and uncomplicated, and it is easy to lead them to discord; unfortunately, many *hu* live amongst them who are evil-minded and cunning and who teach and lead them."²⁶

This teaching and leading does not necessarily refer to religious matters, yet it is probable that Sogdians were also influential in terms of religion. Hereby it must be stressed that they not only propagated Buddhism but also Manichaeism and perhaps also Christianity. Whether it was their influence that led an Uighur king prior to the establishment of the Uighur Empire to give himself a Buddhist name, P'u-sa (Bodhisattva) (reg. 661/3 - ?), we cannot know.²⁷

The cultural influence of the Sogdians on the Turks is born out by the fact that a considerable number of loan words in Old Turkish are of Sogdian origin. This applies to the secular sphere as well as to the religious one.²⁸ As J.P. Laut has pointed out, there are, in the oldest stratum of Turkish literature, found at Turfan, an unusually high number of Sogdian loan words. Looking at these Buddhist documents closer, they not only show archaic features linguistically—they are written in what Laut calls "pre-classial" Turkish—, they are also close to the so-called ñ-dialect of Manichaean texts.²⁹ Some of these texts may go back to the time of the Uighur Empire (745 resp. 762-840). Remarkably enough, they also show, in content, Manichaean influence.³⁰ In early Turkish Buddhist texts, Manichaean phrases and Manichaean imagery are conspicuous.³¹ When, for instance, these texts speak of the "pure law" (*arīḡ nom*), this is a phrase not to be found in Indian Buddhism. There the usual expression is "walk the pure path" (*caratham brahmacāryam*). The term "pure law" is, rather, an originally Manichaean expression.³² Manichaean imagery comes to the fore especially in an apocryphal Buddhist work, the *Säkiz Yükmäk Yaruq Sūtra* ("The Sutra of the eightfold accumulation of light"), where sun and moon are referred to as "palaces" (*ordular*),³³ which is quite unusual for a Buddhist text. In Mani-

chaeism, however, the notion of sun and moon being palaces, and as such seats of certain redeeming gods, is part and parcel of the whole system.

Of the Turkish Buddhist texts published so far, a number show ancient linguistic features,³⁴ and to some extent also concepts reminiscent of Manichaeism:

1. The Old Turkish version of the Lotus Sūtra³⁵
2. Buddhist narratives like the story of the good and the bad brother (Kalyāṇaṃkara and Pāpaṃkara)³⁶
3. Fragments of the biography of the Buddha³⁷
4. A Buddhist Catechism, written in Tibetan script³⁸
5. The “London Scroll” of the apocryphal work *Sākiz Yükmäk Yaruq Sutra*³⁹
6. The text with the title *Maitrisimit*, “The encounter with Maitreya”.⁴⁰

This is certainly one of the most important works of Turkish Buddhism. It is the Uighur rendering of a Tocharian text, fragments of which have, indeed, been found. The colophones claim that the original was Indian (*ānātkāk*), but no such Indian original has been discovered, neither in Sanskrit nor in any Prakrit language. Nor are there translations of this work in Tibetan or Chinese. It appears that the text was actually written in Central Asia, since there is a reference to the Tarim (Sita) river in it. It has been called “one of the most important literary creations of the Hīnayāna Turks of the northern Tarim area in pre-Islamic time”.⁴¹ The author or authors of this work, which is a drama performed on New Year’s day (*yangi kūn*), were apparently aware of a wide range of classical Buddhist literature, since there are references especially to Jākata and Avadāna stories, only part of which are preserved in Turkish. An older text, found in Sängim near Turfan, stems probably from the 8th cent., whereas another manuscript, found in Hami, is to be dated to the 11th cent.

It may safely be assumed that many Turkish Buddhist monks were conversant with Sanskrit Buddhist literature, many texts of this category having been found in the Turfan area as well as in other places along the northern and southern silk route leading around the Tarim Basin. The number of texts translated from San-

skrit and Prākṛit (not Pāli, however), furthermore from Kuchean (Tocharian A) and finally from Chinese must have been great. Especially from the 8th/9th cent. on, if not earlier, Buddhist texts were rendered in Turkish from Chinese.⁴² One of the most celebrated translators was Šingqo Šāli Tutung who lived in the 10th cent. and whose various translations also include the biography of Hsüen-tsang.⁴³ There are also instance of translations from Tibetan.⁴⁴

In the Turfan oasis which became one of the main centers of Turkish Buddhism, that religion must have been present in the 4th or 5th cent., if not even earlier. To some extent, it had been adopted by Chinese living here, as a Chinese-Buddhist temple inscription, probably from 469 A.D., shows.⁴⁵ It hails a ruler as Maitreya, and it includes Taoist and Confucian concepts.

The Uighurs who settled in Turfan in the 9th cent., also turned, increasingly, to the religion of the Buddha, after giving up their ancient faith, although a number of Manichaean kings and their subjects adhered to Manichaeism. Unfortunately we do not know which kings these were. It seems that Manichaeism and Buddhism flourished side by side for a number of centuries, but it is clear that Buddhism increasingly dominated the scene⁴⁶ up to the conversion of the ruler of Turfan to Islam at the end of the 15th cent. At the end of the 10th cent., a Chinese envoy, Wang yen-tê, found in Kocho (Kao-ch'ang) only one Manichaean temple left, but a flourishing Buddhist culture with some fifty Buddhist convents and a library of Chinese Buddhists texts.⁴⁷

In Tun-huang, there must have been a number of Uighur monks, as is evident from the Uighur literature found in the walled-up library. Finally, Buddhism must have remained alive among the "Yellow Uighurs" of Kansu, where Buddhist texts like the "Sūtra of Golden Light" (*Suvarṇaprabhāsa-sūtra*), stemming from the 17th cent., were found. Some Uighur texts were also found near Lake Etsen-Gol.⁴⁸

The script used to write Turkish Buddhist texts was primarily the Uighur cursive script, developed from the Sogdian. Sometimes, the Uighur text is accompanied by Brāhmī glosses or by Chinese characters. The Uighur script was used both for writing and printing. In a few instances, Tibetan script was employed as in the case of the aforementioned Buddhist catechism.

In so far as Turkish Buddhist literature is concerned, a very general survey was given by W. Scharlipp in 1980.⁴⁹ Since then, however, various other texts have also been edited.⁵⁰ Scharlipp points out that the 10th, 13th and 14th cent. were the times when Turkish Buddhism flourished most. Of the various works in Turkish, some must have been copious, for in some cases sheets have been found bearing a page number above 100 or even 300.

In the following, we do not intend to give an exhaustive survey of Buddhist literature in Uighur (Old Turkish). Rather, we want to point out the general types of literature that are represented.

In so far as *Vinaya* texts are concerned, their lack is conspicuous. Apparently, the *Vinaya* texts were studied in Sanskrit.⁵¹ With regard to *Abhidharma* literature, we mention first the *Abhidharmakośa*, portions of which are preserved. In Tun-huang, an Uighur translation of *Sthiramati's Commentary on the Abhidharmakośa* was found. It was translated from Chinese, but the Chinese version is no longer extant. It encompasses about 600 memorial verses and is accompanied by a detailed explication of the teaching of the Sarvāstivādins.⁵²

Of Hīnayāna texts, preserved only in Uighur (and partially in Tocharian), we mentioned the *Maitrisimit*. Of the classical Mahāyāna Sūtras, we have already referred to the "Lotos Sūtra", (*Saddharmapūṇḍarīka-Sūtra*), a few leaves of which are preserved. The "Sūtra of Golden Light" (*Suvarṇaprabhāsa-Sūtra*) is one of the major texts preserved in Uighur.⁵³ It was probably translated from I-Tsing's Chinese version by Šingqo Šāli Tutung in the 10th cent., as a number of leaves would suggest.⁵⁴ A manuscript of the whole text, found in Kansu, and stemming from the 17th cent., makes it quite clear that a Tibetan version was consulted for the introduction. The Uighur text contains many explanations, showing how popular it was.⁵⁵ There are also colophon types of passages not only appended to but included in the text itself. One of the striking aspect about the Uighur version is that it reflects a more personal type of religiosity. Thus, when the Chinese text makes reference to the Buddha or the Buddhas, the Uighur version refers to "our father, the Buddha", or "our fathers, the Buddhas".⁵⁶

Of the works relating to *Prajñāpāramitā*-literature, we have the Diamond Sūtra (*Vajracchedika-Sūtra*) preserved in an Uighur transla-

tion of a Chinese version of the text.⁵⁷ Up to now, fragments from 8 different manuscripts have been found. The oldest Central Asian text stems from the year 905 A.D., i.e. 500 years after Kumārajīva's translation of the Vajracchedika into Chinese. Close to the *Prajñāpāramitā*-literature is the famous *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-Sūtra* which seems to have been as popular among the Turkish as the Chinese Buddhists.⁵⁸ Also in connection with the *Prajñāpāramitā*-literature is a doctrinal letter of Nāgārjuna, the *Suḥrillekha* (Letter to a Friend), fragments of which are also preserved in Uighur.⁵⁹

Of the classical Mahāyāna texts, we mention further documents connected with the Amitābha cult. Thus there are manuscripts of a work entitles *Abitaki* ("Amitābha-Sūtra").⁶⁰ This is not, however, a translation of one of the well known texts of Amitābha religiosity, but rather the translation of a Chinese work connected, as the title shows, with the "Society of the White Lotus Flower". The Uighur text describes various meditational practices and contains an abundance of quotations from the well-known texts of the Amitābha cult.

The next category of Buddhist Turkish literature to be mentioned is that of apocryphal sūtras. To this group belongs the aforementioned *Säkiz Yükmäk Yaruq Sūtra*. It is a work connected with *Yogacāra* philosophy, although there probably never was an Indian original. The text seems to have been first written in China. We also know of Tibetan and Mongolian versions. A large number of fragments and text portions from various manuscripts have been found, and virtually the whole text is preserved in a London scroll. Of the many other apocryphal works, translated from Chinese, we mention here the Sūtra "Seeing the body and the mind (*citta*)", as the Uighur version is called. It was also translated by Šingqo Šāli Tutung in the 10th cent.⁶¹

A further group of texts consists of commentaries to the larger and more important sūtras. Of the commentaries to the "Sūtra of Golden Light", for instance, a text is preserved explaining the ten-fold significance of faith. It was translated from Chinese.⁶² Suffice it to point out that fragments of other commentaries, also translated from Chinese, do exist.

In so far as Tantric texts are concerned, a number of works of this category was translated from Tibetan in the Mongol period

(13./14. cent.). Thus we have a Tantric ritual text explaining the creation of and meditation of a *maṇḍala*, to mention only one example.⁶³ In this connection, magical texts of different kinds are also to be referred to.⁶⁴

A text in a category of its own is the *Insadi Sūtra*.⁶⁵ It probably stems from the 13th or 14th cent. The copy we have is of the 17th or 18th cent. The text deals with the origin of and the course of events in the Pravāraṇa-ceremony, which concluded the rainy period in India. The document is Mahāyānistic in character, since it mentions various Mahāyāna texts. Yet this is a text written, originally, in Turkish. It stems from a time when Islam was making inroads into East Turkestan. The hope for the appearance of Maitreya is voiced and figures of West Asian religions, like "Mother Mary" and Mohammed, are mentioned critically.

Further classical and secondary sūtras are mentioned by A. von Gabain in her survey of 1964.⁶⁶ Since that time, a number of further texts of his category as well as of Buddhist Āgamas have been published.⁶⁷ This also applies to the Buddhist stories and narratives enumerated by her.⁶⁸

A noteworthy category of Turkish literature consists of confessions of sins.⁶⁹ A major text of this type, translated from Chinese, is the *Kṣanti qūlyuluq nom* ("Sūtra of Confession").⁷⁰ By reciting this text, one acted as a Bodhisattva, taking influence on the fate of "suffering beings" in *samsāra*, which due to their own bad *karma*, could not attain salvation by themselves. When the Uighur translation of this text was made from Chinese, we do not know. Beside this text, a number of confessional formulae exist in Uighur. Some of them partly agree with Manichaean confessional formulae.⁷¹ There seems to have been mutual influence, since confessional texts for laymen, as we have them here, were not known in India. A characteristic feature of these Uighur texts is that on the one hand they are formalized, whereas on the other hand names of laymen are inserted, i.e. names of people who gave donations for having such texts copied. The question arises why confessional formulae have such a big significance in Turkish Buddhism. It seems to me that this is not only a matter of foreign influence. Rather, the notion of sinfulness expressed here reflects a feeling of helplessness over against the outward powers of nature and history. In the oasis

towns of Central Asia, ever endangered by nomad and foreign powers, there was a feeling of being not the subject, but the object of events. This expressed itself religiously in terms of sinfulness.

Having regarded in general the main categories of Turkish Buddhist literature, it becomes obvious that this literature is, to a great extent, translated. As pointed out, translations were made from Indian languages (Sanskrit, Prākṛit) but also from Tocharian and increasingly from Chinese. In Mongol times, Tibetan literature was also translated into Uighur. What, then, is specifically Turkish? Beside a text like the *Insadi Sūtra* and the range of confessional texts, are there indigenous Turkish works?

The question is to be answered in the affirmative. Mainly two fields are to be mentioned in this connection. Firstly, there is a considerable poetic literature in Turkish.⁷² Certainly many of the poems give to a classical content a new form. Thus the text on the expiation of sins in Chapt. V of the “Sūtra of Golden Light” is rendered in verses.⁷³ But there are also poems composed independent of classical texts, including many praises. Other poems deal with different aspects of religious and secular life. In the poetical texts edited and translated by P. Zieme, the subjects are most varied. Thus there is a poem exhorting laymen to give alms, one on death and intransiency, several on Buddhist philosophical issues, ect.⁷⁴

Furthermore there are the colophones, sometimes written in vers form.⁷⁵ They reflect indigenous Turkish Buddhism as no other literary genre. These colophons are often extensive. Since they stem, to a great extent, from lay donors, they express, in the main, a popular type of religiosity. In this Buddhistic folk belief, various notions, clearly distinguished by “theologians”, could be identified. Thus Nirvāṇa, the “realm of the gods” (*tāngri yiri*), the Western Paradise of Amitābha and the encounter with Maitreya were all regarded as images of salvation that were freely interchangeable.⁷⁶ The most striking feature of the colophones is, of course, their personal character. They reflect a religiosity in which general Buddhist notions gained meaning for the individual.

As only a small portion of Turkish Buddhist literature has been preserved, and since even this is often in a fragmentary state, the basis for our assessment is narrow. Yet, what we have points to the

fact that Turkish Buddhist literature must have been encompassing. What is preserved points to the fact that the Turks of Central Asia did have a contribution to make to Buddhist literature.⁷⁷

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¹ For the appearance and the history of the Turks in Central Asia cf. B. Spuler, "Geschichte Mittelasiens seit dem Auftreten der Türken", *HO* I, 5,5 (Leiden-Köln, 1966), pp. 123-310.

² For a sketch of the early religion of the Turks cf. A. von Gabain, "Inhalt und magische Bedeutung der alttürkischen Inschriften", *Anthropos* 48 (1953), pp. 537-556; J.-P. Roux, "Les religions dans les sociétés Turko-Mongoles", *Revue de l'histoire des religions* CCI (1984), pp. 393-420; J.-P. Roux, *La religion des Turcs et des Mongols*. (Paris 1984). (Bibliothèque Historique, Collection d'Histoire des Religions). J.-P. Roux, "Turkic Religions", in: *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. M. Eliade. Vol. 15. (New York-London, 1987), pp. 87-94.

³ T. Tekin, *A Grammar of Orkhon Turkic*. (The Hague, 1968). (Indiana University Publications, Uralic and Altaic Series, Vol. 69), p. 232 (Turkish text) and 263 (English trans.). For the early history of the Turks cf. Spuler, *op. cit.*, pp. 127ff. and K.-H. Golzio, *Kings, Khans and other Rulers of Early Central Asia*. (Köln, 1984). (Arbeitsmaterialien zur Religionsgeschichte 11), pp. 60f. Golzio names four rulers before Bumïn.

⁴ A. von Gabain, "Buddhistische Türkenmission", *Asiatica. Festschrift Friedrich Weller*. Zum 65. Geburtstag gewidmet von seinen Freunden, Kollegen und Schülern. (Leipzig, 1954), p. 166.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ von Gabain, *op. cit.*, (n. 4), p. 167.

⁷ Spuler, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

⁸ von Gabain, *op. cit.*, p. 162f.

⁹ von Gabain, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

¹⁰ von Gabain, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

¹¹ von Gabain, *op. cit.*, pp. 164f. The role of the Sogdians in early Turkish Buddhism is pointed out by J.P. Laut, *Der frühe türkische Buddhismus und seine literarischen Denkmäler*. (Wiesbaden, 1986). (Veröffentlichungen der Societas Uralo-Altaica, Bd. 21), pp. 1ff.

¹² von Gabain, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

¹³ Cf. Spuler, *op. cit.*, pp. 136ff.

¹⁴ T. Tekin, *op. cit.*, pp. 216f. and 285. Cf. also Spuler, *op. cit.*, pp. 139ff.

¹⁵ For the rise of the Uighurs cf. Spuler, *op. cit.*, pp. 148ff.

¹⁶ Cf. S.N.C. Lieu, *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China. A Historical Survey*. (Manchester, 1985), p. 193.

¹⁷ Cf. G. Schlegel, *Die chinesische Inschrift auf dem uigurischen Denkmal in Kara Balgassun*. (Heltingfors, 1896). (Mémoires de la Société Finno-Ougrienne IX), p. 61. Cf. p. 58: "Wiederholt bedauerten wir dass ihr früher unwissend wart und die Geister Götter [lit. Buddhas] nanntet."

¹⁸ Cf. Laut, *op. cit.*, (n. 11).

¹⁹ S.G. Kljaštornyj and V.A. Livšic, "The Sogdian Inscription of Bugut Revised", *AOH* 26 (1972), pp. 69-102. The significance of this inscription is pointed out by Laut, *op. cit.*, pp. 3ff.

²⁰ Kljaštornyj/Livšic, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

²¹ Cf. T. Tekin, *op. cit.*, (n. 3), pp. 273 and 275.

²² E.G. Pulleyblank, "A Sogdian Colony in Inner Mongolia", *T'oung Pao* 41 (1952), pp. 317-356. Cf. also S.G. Kljaštornyj, "Sur les colonies sogdiennes de la Haute Asie", *UJb* 33 (1961), pp. 95-97.

²³ Liu, Mau-Tsai, *Die chinesischen Nachrichten zur Geschichte der Ost-Türken (T'u-küe)*. Vol. I. (Wiesbaden, 1958). (Göttinger Asiatische Forschungen, Bd. 10), p. 10.

²⁴ Pulleyblank, *op. cit.*, pp. 318f.

²⁵ Pulleyblank, *op. cit.*, pp. 317f.

²⁶ Liu, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

²⁷ Liu, *op. cit.*, p. 351; Spuler, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

²⁸ Cf. K. Röhrborn, "Zum Wanderweg des altindischen Lehnsgutes im Alt-türkischen", *Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Vorderen Orients*. Festschrift für Bertold Spuler zum siebzigsten Geburtstag. (Leiden, 1981), pp. 337-343. Of course, beside the Sogdian and Tocharian as well as Indian influence on Turkish Buddhist terminology there is, increasingly, a Chinese one. Cf. K. Röhrborn, "Zur Terminologie der buddhistischen Sekundär-Überlieferung in Zentralasien", *ZDMG* 133 (1983), pp. 273-296; K. Röhrborn, "Zur Rezeption der chinesisch-buddhistischen Terminologie im Alt-türkischen", *WZKS* XXX (1986), pp. 179-187.

²⁹ Laut, *op. cit.*, pp. 9f.

³⁰ Cf. H.-J. Klimkeit, *Die Begegnung von Christentum, Gnosis und Buddhismus an der Seidenstraße*. (Opladen, 1986). (Rheinisch-Westf. Akad. d. Wiss., Vorträge G 283). For Buddhist influence on Manichaean texts cf. H.-J. Klimkeit, "Buddhistische Übernahmen im iranischen und türkischen Manichäismus", W. Heissig and H.-J. Klimkeit (ed.), *Synkretismus in den Religionen Zentralasiens*. (Wiesbaden, 1987), pp. 58-75.

³¹ Cf. for references Klimkeit, *op. cit.*, (n. 30), (1986), pp. 46ff.

³² Cf. UigWb, s.v. arg. Prof. Schmithausen makes me aware of the Indian term mentioned. The term "pure law" is reminiscent of the Psalms. In Ps. 12,7 we read, in Luther's translation, "Die Worte des Herrn sind lauter wie Silber" (The English Revised Standard Version has (Ps. 12,6), "The promises of the Lord are promises that are pure..."). Cf. also Ps. 18,31 which reads, according to Luther, "die Worte des Herrn sind durchläutert". (Revised Standard Version (18,31): "...the promise of the Lord proves true").

³³ W. Bang, A. von Gabain and G. R. Rachmati, "Türkische Turfantexte VI: Das buddhistische Sūtra *Sākiz yūkmāk*". (Berlin, 1934). (SPAW 1934), pp. 93-192. Cf. pp. 125f.

³⁴ Cf. Laut, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

³⁵ D. Maue and K. Röhrborn, "Zur alttürkischen Version des Saddharmapuṇḍarika-Sūtra", *CAJ* 24 (1980), pp. 251-273.

³⁶ J. R. Hamilton, *Le Conte Bouddhique du Bon et du Mauvais Prince en Version Ouïgoure, Manuscrits ouïgours de Touen-Houang*. (Paris, 1971). (Mission Paul Pelliot, Documents conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale 3).

³⁷ F.W.K. Müller, *Uigurica* II. (Berlin, 1911). (APAW 1910, Nr. 3), pp. 4-7; J. P. Laut, "Ein Bruchstück einer alttürkischen Buddhobiographie", *UJb*, N.F. 3 (1983), pp. 88-101.

³⁸ D. Maue and K. Röhrborn, "Ein 'buddhistischer Katechismus' in alt-türkischer Sprache und tibetischer Schrift". Teil I: ZDMG 134 (1984), pp. 286-313; Teil II: ZDMG 135 (1985), pp. 68-91.

³⁹ Bang, von Gabain and Rachmati, *op. cit.*, (no. 33).

⁴⁰ Ş. Tekin, *Maitrisimit nom bitig. Die uigurische Übersetzung eines Werkes der buddhistischen Vaibhāsika-Schule*. 2. Vols. (Berlin, 1980). (Berliner Turfantexte IX); Geng Shimin and H.-J. Klimkeit, in collaboration with H. Eimer and J. P. Laut, *Das Zusammentreffen mit Maitreya. Die ersten fünf Kapitel der Hami-Version der Maitrisimit*. (Wiesbaden, 1988). (Asiatische Forschungen 103). Cf. also: Geng Shimin/H.-J. Klimkeit/J. P. Laut, "Der Herabstieg des Bodhisattva Maitreya vom Tuṣita-Götterland zur Erde." Das 10. Kapitel der Hami-Handschrift der *Maitrisimit*", in: *AoF* 14 (1987), pp. 350-376; Geng/Klimkeit/Laut, "Das Erscheinen des Bodhisattva." Das 11. Kapitel der Hami-Handschrift der *Maitrisimit*", in: *AoF* 15 (1988), pp. 315-366.

⁴¹ Ş. Tekin, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 7.

⁴² The Nirvāṇa-Sūtra, named above, was already translated in the 6th cent.

⁴³ Cf. P. Zieme, "Singqu Sāli Tutung – Übersetzer buddhistischer Schriften ins Uigurische", *Tractata Altaica. Denis Sinor sexagenario ... dedicata*. Ed. W. Heissig et al. (Wiesbaden, 1976), pp. 767-773. Cf. also: P. Zieme, "Xuangzangs Biographie und das *Xiyuji* in alttürkischer Überlieferung", in: J. P. Laut and K. Röhrborn (edd.), *Buddhistische Erzählliteratur und Hagiographie in türkischer Überlieferung*. Wiesbaden 1990. (Veröffentlichungen der Societas Uralo-Altaica, Vol. 27), pp. 75-107.

⁴⁴ This pertains mainly to Tantric texts translated in Yüan times, e.g. G. Kara and P. Zieme, *Fragmente tantrischer Werke in uigurischer Übersetzung*. (Berlin, 1976). (Berliner Turfantexte VII). However, some Mahāyāna texts were translated from Tibetan earlier, e.g. the introduction of the "Sūtra of Golden Light". Cf. von Gabain, *op. cit.*, (n. 4), p. 171.

⁴⁵ O. Franke, *Eine chinesische Tempelinschrift aus Idikutšahri bei Turfan. (Turkistan)*. (Berlin, 1907). (APAW 1907, Anhang: Abhandlungen nicht zur Akademie gehöriger Gelehrter: Philosophische und historische Abhandlungen), pp. 1-92.

⁴⁶ von Gabain, *op. cit.*, (n. 4), pp. 169ff.

⁴⁷ Cf. M.A. Stein, *Innermost Asia*. Vol. II. (Oxford, 1926, repr. Delhi, 1981), pp. 582ff.

⁴⁸ Cf. J.R. Hamilton, *Manuscripts Ouïgours du IX^e-X^e siècle de Touen-Houang*. Vol. I. (Paris, 1986). (Fondation Singer-Polignac), pp. ix-xxiii.

⁴⁹ W. Scharlipp, "Kurzer Überblick über die buddhistische Literatur der Türken", *Materialia Turcica* 6 (1980), pp. 37-53; cf. also the following surveys by A. von Gabain: "Der Buddhismus in Zentralasien", *HO* I,8,2 (Leiden-Köln, 1961), pp. 496-514; "Zentralasiatische türkische Literaturen I: Nichtislamische alttürkische Literatur", *HO* I,5,1 (Leiden-Köln, 1963), pp. 207-228 (repr. Leiden-Köln, 1982, pp. 207-228 with a supplement pp. 469-471); "Die alt-türkische Literatur", *Philologiae Turcae Fundamenta* II, ed. P.N. Boratav. (Wiesbaden, 1964), pp. 211-243.

⁵⁰ Cf. bibliographies in P. Zieme, *Buddhistische Stabreimdichtungen der Uiguren*. (Berlin, 1985). (Berliner Turfantexte XIII), pp. 14-21, in Laut, *op. cit.*, (n. 11), pp. 213-228, and in UigWb.

⁵¹ von Gabain, *op. cit.*, (n. 49), (1963), p. 221.

⁵² Cf. Scharlipp, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

⁵³ W. Radloff and S.E. Malov, *Suvarṇaprabhāsa* (St. Petersburg, 1913-1917). (Bibliotheca Buddhica 17). German trans. (up to beginning of chapt. 14): W.

Radloff, *Suvarṇaprabhāsa (Das Goldglanz-Sūtra)*, ed. S. Malov. (Leningrad, 1930). (Bibliotheca Buddhica 27). Cf. also K. Kudara and K. Röhrborn, "Zwei verirrte Blätter des uigurischen Goldglanz-Sūtras im Etnografiska Museum, Stockholm", *ZDMG* 132 (1982), pp. 336-347.

⁵⁴ Cf. A. von Gabain, "Die alttürkische Literatur", *Philologiae Turcae Fundamenta* II, ed. L. Bazin et al. Wiesbaden 1964 (211-243), pp. 225f.; P. Zieme, *Die Stabreimtexte der Uiguren von Turfan und Dunhuang. Studien zur alttürkischen Dichtung*. ["Dissertation", i.e. Habilitationsschrift Berlin 1983]. In the press (to appear 1990), Ch. I B 14 (MS p. 36).

⁵⁵ Cf. J. Nobel, *Suvarṇaprabhāsa-Sūtra. Das Goldglanz-Sūtra ...* Vol. I. (Leiden, 1958), p. xxxiv.

⁵⁶ H.-J. Klimkeit, "Buddha als Vater", *Fernöstliche Weisheit und christlicher Glaube*. Festgabe für Heinrich Dumoulin SJ zur Vollendung des 80. Lebensjahres. (Mainz, 1985), pp. 240ff.

⁵⁷ G. Hazai and P. Zieme, *Fragmente der uigurischen Version des "Jin'gangjing mit den Gāthās des Meister Fu"*. (Berlin, 1971). (Berliner Turfantexte I).

⁵⁸ Scharlipp, *op. cit.*, (n. 49), p. 45.

⁵⁹ Scharlipp, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

⁶⁰ A. Temir, K. Kudara and K. Röhrborn, "Die alttürkischen Abitaki-Fragmente des Etnografya Müzesi, Ankara", *Turcica* XVI (1984), pp. 13-28. O. Sertkaya and K. Röhrborn, "Bruchstücke der alttürkischen Amitābha-Literatur aus Istanbul", *UJb N.F.* 4 (1984), pp. 97-117.

⁶¹ G. Hazai, "Fragmente eines uigurischen Blockdruck-Faltbuches", *AoF* III (1975), pp. 91-108.

⁶² W. Bang and A. von Gabain, "Türkische Turfan-Texte V. Aus buddhistischen Schriften". (Berlin, 1931). (SPAW 1931), pp. 340-356 (Text B).

⁶³ Kara and Zieme, *op. cit.*, (n. 44).

⁶⁴ von Gabain, *op. cit.*, (n. 49), (1964), pp. 228-230.

⁶⁵ S. Tezcan, *Das uigurische Insadi-Sūtra*. (Berlin, 1974). (Berliner Turfantexte III).

⁶⁶ von Gabain, *op. cit.*, (n. 49), (1964), pp. 225-227.

⁶⁷ Cf. bibliographies referred to above (n. 50), furthermore J.P. Laut and K. Röhrborn, *Der türkische Buddhismus in der japanischen Forschung* (Wiesbaden, 1988). (Veröffentlichungen der Societas Uralo-Altaica, Bd. 23), where Röhrborn gives a survey of Turkish Buddhist studies in Japan.

⁶⁸ von Gabain, *op. cit.*, (n. 49), (1964), pp. 221-228.

⁶⁹ Cf. von Gabain, *op. cit.*, (n. 49), (1964), pp. 227-228.

⁷⁰ K. Röhrborn, *Eine uigurische Totenmesse*. (Berlin, 1971). (Berliner Turfantexte II); I. Warnke, *Eine buddhistische Lehrschrift über das Bekennen der Sünden*. (Unpublished thesis, Berlin (GDR), 1978).

⁷¹ Cf. H.-J. Klimkeit, "Manichäische und buddhistische Beichtformeln aus Turfan. Beobachtungen zur Beziehung zwischen Gnosis und Mahāyāna", *ZRGG* 29 (1977), pp. 193-228.

⁷² Zieme, *op. cit.*, (n. 50); P. Zieme, *Die Stabreimtexte der Uiguren von Turfan und Dunhuang. Studien zur alttürkischen Dichtung*. The so-called "vyākaraṇa-poems", expressing the promise of future Buddhahood, also belong to the poetic literature of the Uighur Buddhists. Cf. J. P. Laut/P. Zieme, "Ein zweisprachiger Lobpreis auf den Bāg von Kočo und seine Gemahlin", in: J. P. Laut and K. Röhrborn (edd.), *Buddhistische Erzählliteratur und Hagiographie in türkischer Überlieferung*. Wiesbaden 1990, pp. 15-36.

⁷³ Zieme, *op. cit.*, (n. 50), pp. 86ff.

⁷⁴ Zieme, *op. cit.*, (n. 50), pp. 106ff.

⁷⁵ Zieme, *op. cit.*, (n. 50), pp. 155ff.

⁷⁶ H.-J. Klimkeit, "Der Stifter im Lande der Seidenstraßen. Bemerkungen zur buddhistischen Laienfrömmigkeit", *ZRGG* 35 (1983), pp. 289-308.

⁷⁷ Thus, for instance, accounts of the Buddha's life, the foundings of the order of nuns, etc. can be presented in quite an indigenous manner. Cf. H.-J. Klimkeit, *Der Buddha. Leben und Lehre*. Stuttgart 1990, pp. 55f., 77, 83f.; J. P. Laut, "Die Gründung des buddhistischen Nonnenordens in der alttürkischen Überlieferung", in the press (to appear 1990).

Additional note:

After completing the above manuscript, the following article came to my notices: P. Zieme, "Das *Pravāraṇa-Sūtra* in alttürkischer Überlieferung", in: A Green Leaf. Papers in Honour of Professor Jes P. Asmussen. Leiden 1988 (Homages et Opera Minora, Vol. XII), pp. 445-453. Here the author shows that the *Pravāraṇa-Sūtra* is quoted in the above-mentioned *Insadi Sūtra*.

I thank Dr. J. P. Laut, Marburg, for making me aware of some new publications.

Abbreviations

AoF	Altorientalische Forschungen
AOH	Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae
APAW	Abhandlungen der (Königlich) Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin
CAJ	Central Asiatic Journal
HO	Handbuch der Orientalistik, ed. B. Spuler
SPAW	Sitzungsberichte der (Königlich) Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Phil.-hist. Klasse), Berlin
UAlb	Ural-Altaische Jahrbücher
UigWb	Uigurisches Wörterbuch. Sprachmaterial der vorislamischen türkischen Texte aus Zentralasien. Lieferung 1-4. Wiesbaden 1977-1988
WZKS	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft
ZRGG	Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte

THE BUDDHA'S BAD KARMA: A PROBLEM IN THE HISTORY OF THERAVÂDA BUDDHISM

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Introduction

“Buddha’s bad karma” is a veritable contradiction in terms. When reading the Buddha biography preserved in the *Vinayaṭṭakā* and *Suttapiṭakā* of the Pāli canon (*Tipiṭakā*), one cannot help thinking that Gotama led a charmed life: endowed with physical and spiritual perfection, he transcended the attitudes and attachments that are so often the source of human suffering. The *Jātaka* literature explains the perfection (in this life) of Gotama Buddha by describing its karmic roots over aeons of previous lives, during which the Bodhisatta produced unimaginable quantities of good karma. Despite its vastness, the Buddha biography preserved and developed in the Theravāda tradition up to the present contains not the slightest hint that Gotama did anything productive of bad karma; his *parinibbāna* was the extinction of all karma, good and bad.

But embedded within the Pāli canon are records of certain events in the Buddha’s life—systematized in later tradition as twelve in number—which were less than pleasant. Even during the canonical period, some Buddhists interpreted these events as the effects of the Buddha’s own previous bad karma. Their explanation gave birth to the problem of Buddha’s bad karma. The notion that the Buddha suffered bad karma had important implications for both the developing theory of karmic absolutivity and cherished conceptions of Buddhahood. These implications proved so problematic that some later authors denied the thesis altogether, providing alternate causality arguments to explain the unpleasant events in Buddha’s life. Others affirmed the position that these events were the result of Buddha’s own bad karma, but not without modifying certain aspects of the theory of karma and the concept of Buddhahood.

This essay will trace the history of the complex problems sur-

rounding the unpleasant events in the Buddha's life as they developed in Theravāda tradition. Part One surveys the original records of these events, as preserved in the earliest texts of the Pāli canon. Part Two discusses a late canonical text, *Pubbakammapiḷoti*, which analyzes these events as the result of Buddha's own previous bad karma. Part Three explores the texts which deny this karmic explanation and the reasons for these denials. Part Four examines the rebuttals to these denials, which affirm the karmic explanation by answering the objections fellow Buddhists had raised to it.

Part One: The Buddha's sufferings as recorded in the Pāli canon

The unpleasant events in the Buddha's life fall into three general categories: slander from enemies, assaults from enemies, and physical illness or deprivation. But a grasp on the theoretical problems which this essay addresses requires first of all an appreciation of each discrete event; the debate in later tradition raged over particular contextual details. This section of the paper will therefore survey the early Buddhist accounts of each event that later played a role in the larger problem. The above three-fold categorization provides a useful focus, but more beneficial is the narrative detail itself: these were particular events in the Buddha's life for which particular explanations were offered and debated.

Our first category, slander from enemies, is restricted to the Buddha's interaction with two renunciate women named Sundarî and Ciñcamānavikâ. Both were affiliated with "heretics" (*titthiya*) who employed them to cast doubt on the Buddha's chastity and ethical propriety.

The Sundarî story is recorded in the *Udâna* of the *Khuddakanikâya*.¹ In order to help her brethren she repeatedly visited the famous Jetavana at Sâvatthi (Śrāvastī) while the Buddha was staying there. The elaborations of this story in later commentaries² explain that she told inquisitive townspeople whom she met on the road that she was staying in the perfumed cell (*gandhakuṭi*) of Gotama himself. Once the rumor had spread, the heretics murdered Sundarî then hid her corpse in the Jetavana. They reported her disappearance to Prasenadi, king of Kosala, who subsequently searched the Jetavana and discovered the corpse. The

heretics then placed the corpse on a litter and paraded it around town, decrying the wickedness of the Buddhists. Begging for alms, the monks were repeatedly scorned. But in this *Udâna* account, the Buddha remains calm. He instructs the monks to preach to their scorners the evil of lying, and assures them that the raucous will end in seven days. At the end of seven days the people renew their trust in the Buddhists, although no clear reason for this sudden change is given in the *Udâna*. The text merely highlights the certitude of the Buddha that the trouble would pass, and the monks' astonishment at the correctness of his prediction. The commentaries add that the truth was found out when the hired killers, drunkenly bragging, confessed to the crime and the heretics' collusion.

The account of *Ciñcamânavikâ* is very similar, and the stories have suffered some conflation. *Ciñcamânavikâ*'s story is not spelled out explicitly in the canon. It was clearly part of the early tradition, since the core verses of the *Jâtaka* allude to it, but it must have been preserved orally since its full telling exists only in the *Jâtakattakathâ* and other commentarial sources.³ I will discuss the commentarial tellings in depth below; now I will use the commentaries merely to outline the story as it probably existed, orally, during the canonical period. *Ciñcamânavikâ* was a beautiful renunciate woman, employed (as was *Sundarî*) by the heretics to slander Gotama. Like *Sundarî*, she told inquisitive townsfolk that she had been sleeping with the Buddha. Then, at a public festival, she feigned pregnancy and accused Gotama both of being the father and of neglecting his fiscal and ritual responsibilities. All tellings continue to state that Śakra's heavenly throne glowed red at this unrighteousness, and that the townsfolk cursed *Ciñcamânavikâ* and chased her away until the earth itself opened up to suck her into the *avîci* hell. As in the *Sundarî* tale, this attempt by the heretics to defeat Gotama was counterproductive: they suffered a loss of fame, while the Buddha's fame increased.

Just as the stories of slander illustrate not the Buddha's deficiency but rather his great fame, so the stories in our second category (assaults from enemies) illustrate his great power. These stories all revolve around the Buddha's jealous cousin Devadatta, and were included together in the Seventh *Khandhaka* of the *Vinayapiṭaka* (*Cullavagga*), "Divisions in the Sangha".⁴ According to

this text, Devadatta attained certain supernatural powers (*iddhi*) once he had become a monk. Infatuated with his own prestige and honor, he used his favored position with Prince Ajâtasattu to attempt assassination of the Buddha. Devadatta sent a man to kill the Buddha and ordered him to return by a certain path. Then he hired two men to kill the murderer, and four men to kill those two men, and so on up to a group of sixteen. But when the first man went to slay the Buddha, he was so overcome by the Buddha's presence that he fell at his feet confessing. The Buddha exhorted the man to restrain himself from future transgression and sent him away by a different path. When the two (four, eight, sixteen) men came to find their targets, they were successively converted by the Buddha until finally the first man had to report to Devadatta that the Buddha's great power (*iddhi*) makes assassination impossible.

Devadatta resolved to do the deed himself. As the Buddha walked in meditation beneath Vulture's Peak in Rajgir (Râjagaha), Devadatta hurled a boulder at him. "But two mountain peaks came together and stopped that rock and only a splinter from it made the foot of the Blessed One to bleed."⁵ The Buddha admonished Devadatta and told the monks that his deed created evil karma which would work itself out in the immediate future (*anantarika-kamma*).⁶ The monks made plans for the Buddha's protection, but he assured them that the assassination of a Buddha is impossible.

Then Devadatta sent a fierce man-slaying elephant named Nâlâgiri down a road after the Buddha. As the elephant charged, the monks cried out to the Buddha to turn back. But Buddha remained calm, and when the elephant sensed the Buddha's universal love (*metta*) he was instantly tamed. Like the texts describing attempts of heretics to slander the Buddha, this *Vinaya* text describing Devadatta's assaults on the Buddha's person concludes its description by emphasizing that Devadatta's fame diminished, while that of the Buddha increased.

The *Vinaya* text proceeds from this point by describing Devadatta's attempt to divide the monastic community and ends with a prediction that its result will be an aeon of suffering. The Devadatta cycle is retold in a variety of ways in many later Pâli and vernacular texts, and I will discuss some of them below. For now, I only want to emphasize the fact that the *Vinaya* text describes a

number of unpleasant things which befell the Buddha: a rock was hurled at him; a splinter of rock struck his foot; the striking of the foot drew blood; thugs were sent to assassinate him; finally, he was rushed by a mad elephant. But in the *Vinaya* text these unpleasant details highlight the Buddha's greatness: even in the face of danger he is calm; even against the most fearsome of adversaries his power prevails.

The final category is illness and physical deprivation. Into this category fall a number of isolated events recorded, for the most part in an off-hand way, in parts of the Pāli canon. The *Majjhimanikāya* and *Samyuttanikāya*, for example, both mention occasions on which the Buddha suffered a debilitating back-ache.⁷ The famous *Mahāparinibbānasuttaṃ* of the *Dīghanikāya* mentions two instances of physical illness during the last few months of eighty-year-old Gotama's life. Having gone to Beluva for the rainy season, "there fell upon him a dire sickness, and sharp pains came upon him, even unto death."⁸ Through "a strong effort of the will" the Buddha holds back the sickness that he might live long enough to give proper notice of his imminent demise to the monks. Later the same text states that having eaten truffles (or pork) given to him as alms, the Buddha suffered "a dire sickness, the disease of dysentery, and sharp pain came upon him, even unto death."⁹ The wound on Buddha's foot caused by the splintering of the rock hurled by Devadatta also overlaps with this category of physical illness. In relating a sermon delivered at this time, the *Samyuttanikāya* records that "[when] the foot of the Blessed One was wounded with a splinter of stone, great indeed were the pains in his body, painful sensations which were keen, sharp, severe, disagreeable and unpleasant."¹⁰

The remaining two unpleasant events in the canonical Buddha biography also fall into this general category, although they concern physical deprivation rather than illness. The first of them is well-known: for six years before attaining enlightenment at Bodh Gaya, the Bodhisatta performed severe and physically debilitating austerities as a renunciate ascetic.¹¹ The second is less well-known. According to the *Vinaya*, during one rainy season the Buddha and monks resided at Verañja, honoring the request of a Brahmin from that city. It was a time of famine, and the monks, being unable to

obtain almsfood, were forced to scavenge the earth for bulbous roots. Even the Buddha had to eat this inferior food (which later tradition calls *yava* or crude grain, as opposed to rice), although Ānanda carefully prepared it by pounding before feeding it to him.¹²

There is no denying that slander, assault and physical illness are unpleasant. But when we consider the sufferings which most human beings undergo in an eighty-year life, we must admit that Gotama Buddha's life was comparatively free of suffering. Moreover, in each of the canonical accounts recording one of these unpleasant events, we are assured that the Buddha did not suffer anxiety, sorrow or even distraction in the face of such ordinarily-discomfiting adversities as hunger, pain, danger and false accusation. Nevertheless, some degree of unpleasantness did befall even Gotama Buddha; at the very least, during a few moments of his otherwise charmed existence the Buddha's life was not quite up to par.

Part Two: Bad karma as the reason for Buddha's sufferings

The texts we have just discussed belong to the earliest layers of the Buddhist canon, so in a sense the problems concerning the Buddha's suffering are as old as Buddhism itself. But in the early parts of the canon, there is no evidence that Buddhists believed these events the result of bad karma, nor even that they considered the fact of Buddha suffering to be in any way problematic. Moreover, there is no evidence in these texts that these disparate unpleasant events were contemplated together, as a category.

By the late canonical period, however, a text was produced which makes obvious the fact that at least some Buddhists thought about these unpleasant aspects of the Buddha biography categorically, and explained them as the effects of Buddha's own bad karma. This text is called *Pubbakammapiṭṭi*, or *The Strands (Rags) of Previous Karma*, contained as number 387 of the *Therāpadāna*. Oddly¹³, it is placed in the section of the *Apadāna* (of the *Khuddakanikāya*) devoted to biographies of famous monks. But its colophon places it in the *Buddhāpadāna* section of that same text which, as its name implies, contains a cosmic biography of the Buddha spanning countless

aeons of self-perfection (and thus paralleling the *Jātaka* collection, but in a greatly abbreviated form). There is no question that the subject of the text is the Buddha himself, not a monk. In versified *sutta* fashion, it portrays itself as a disclosure made by the Buddha to the community of monks at Lake Anotatta (Skt: Anavatapta): “Near the Anotatta Lake, on the delightful rocky ground, where various gems were sparkling and various sweet scents [were exuded] in the forest, the Lord of the World, surrounded by a huge community of monks, sitting down, then explained his own previous karma: ‘Hear from me, O monks, the karma produced by me [and] the ripening of strands of karma in the Buddha himself.’”¹⁴

The form of *Pubbakammāpiloti* is straightforward. In the briefest of ways, the Buddha describes twelve previous lives in which he performed evil deeds, and states that these deeds resulted in great suffering throughout aeons of transmigration and finally resulted in the unpleasant aspects of the Buddha biography discussed in Part One. The text draws clear causal connections between the previous evil deed and later suffering. Thus the Buddha begins by stating that in a former life he was a scoundrel named Munāli, who slandered an innocent Paccekabuddha named Surabhi. As a result of that deed (*tena kammavipākēna*) he transmigrated in hell (*niraye*) for a long time, experiencing thousands of years of *dukkha*. As the remaining effect of that deed (*tena kammāvasesena*) he suffered the slanderous accusations of Sundarī.¹⁵

Similarly, in a previous existence the Buddha slandered Nanda, a disciple of the Buddha Sabbābhibhu. As a result he transmigrated in hell for ten thousand years, and upon obtaining a human body suffered much slander. The final result of this karma was the slander by Ciñcamānavikā.¹⁶ Previously Buddha was a learned Brahmin, teaching mantras to five hundred youths in a great forest. Then he accused a sage named Isigana of unchastity. His pupils heard him and repeated his accusation as they begged food from the villagers. As a result, they all suffered slander when Sundarī was murdered.¹⁷ In a previous life, greedy for wealth, the Buddha murdered his own half-brother by crushing him with a rock; as a result, his cousin Devadatta threw a boulder at him and a splinter wounded his foot.¹⁸ Being a boy playing on the road, he threw a

shard at a passing Paccekabuddha. As a result, Devadatta employed thugs to kill him.¹⁹ Mounted on an elephant, he attacked a Paccekabuddha going for alms. As a result, Nâlâgiri the fierce tuskier rushed him in Rajgir.²⁰ Born as the unrighteous King Patthiva, the Buddha killed a man with a knife. After “roasting in hell” he suffered the remaining bad karma when the splinter from Devadatta’s boulder caused his foot to become infected.²¹ Born as the son of a fisherman, he felt happiness upon seeing the men bring in dead fish. As a result he got a headache in this life, and his clansmen (who had formerly been the fishermen) were killed in Viḍuḍabha’s war on the Śâkyas.²² In another life he cursed the disciples of the Buddha Phussa saying, “no rice for you—chew and eat inferior grain”. As a result, the Buddha ate inferior food during his sojourn in Verañja.²³ Formerly born as the son of a wrestler, he interrupted a wrestling match (and, according to the commentary, broke the back of one of the wrestlers in the process). As a result, he suffered backache.²⁴ As a physician he administered a purge to the son of a millionaire. As a result, in this life he suffered from diarrhea.²⁵ Finally, born as Jotipâla he reviled the Buddha Kassapa: “Whence the enlightenment of this baldy, the enlightenment so difficult to obtain?” As a result, he performed severe austerities for six years before obtaining his own enlightenment.²⁶

Pubbakammapiḷoti is unique in more ways than one. It is the only text of the *Apadâna* which focuses on bad karma and its unpleasant results; the *Apadâna* genre is otherwise devoted exclusively to good karma and its pleasant results.²⁷ More important for our purposes, *Pubbakammapiḷoti* is the only text of the Pâli canon which explains the Buddha’s sufferings as the result of his own bad karma and which provides accounts of his previous bad deeds and sufferings therefrom. Although much Pâli canonical literature (especially the *Jâtaka*) devotes itself to previous good karma of the Buddha, only here do we learn the other side of the coin.

There are in fact good reasons to suspect that *Pubbakammapiḷoti* has its origin in a “Hînayâna” tradition other than the Theravâda (e.g., the Sarvâstivâda or Mahâsaṃghika). I am not familiar with any use of the term *kammapiḷoti* anywhere in the Pâli canon and commentaries except in reference to this very text. The *Divyâvadâna* of the Sarvâstivâdins, however, uses the Sanskrit equivalent *kar-*

maploti quite often, usually in a stereotyped phrase by which hungry ghosts (*pretas*) inquire of the Buddha the cause of their fates, asking “what is this strand of karma?”²⁸ The Sarvâstivâdins seem to have known more than the term; they seem to have known the prototype of our Pâli text. The *Divyâvadâna*, in the midst of a catalogue of the places where the Buddha made especially important disclosures, states that “the previous strands of karma have been disclosed at the Great Lake Anavatapta [by the Buddha who was] with the disciples.”²⁹

As important as these clues pointing to the Sarvâstivâdins is another which points to the Mahâsaṃghikas. We have seen that all of the this-life events discussed in *Pubbakammaṇḍalitī* have direct antecedents in earlier texts of the canon. Significantly, however, only one of the stories of previous lives has an antecedent in the Pâli texts, namely the story of Jotipâla and Kassapa, in a telling which does not suggest that the Bodhisatta “slandered” that Buddha or produced bad karma thereby.³⁰ Those later commentaries that discuss the previous evil deeds, to which we shall turn below, always do so by quoting the *Apadâna*; the karmic explanation of Buddha’s suffering, indeed the majority of the stories about the Buddha’s evil deeds in earlier lives, is unique to *Pubbakammaṇḍalitī*. But the Mahâsaṃghika *Mahāvastu-avadâna* records one of these “unknown” stories, namely the slander by the Bodhisattva of a disciple of Buddha Sarvâbhibhu (Pâli Sabbâbhibhu).³¹ This description is considerably more detailed than the mere reference to this event in the Pâli *Pubbakammaṇḍalitī*. It is especially significant since it also parallels the Pâli text in describing the Buddha’s slander by a woman (whose name is lost in a textual lacuna) as a karmic effect of the Buddha’s earlier bad deed.³² That is, it not only tells the tale to which our text alludes, but does so in order to make precisely the same connection: the Buddha suffered slander because in a former life he was himself a slanderer. It is probable that the lacuna in the *Mahāvastu* was once filled with the name of Ciñcamânavikâ, whose slander of the Buddha was, according to *Pubbakammaṇḍalitī*, the result of his having insulted a disciple of Sabbâbhibhu (Sarvâbhibhu). It is at any rate certain that the Mahâsaṃghikas preserved traditions paralleling *Pubbakammaṇḍalitī*. Thus, although I have not been able to trace more of the *Pubbakam-*

mapiloti in the Buddhist Sanskrit literature, perhaps because I have overlooked parallels or perhaps because they did not survive history, it would seem that the author of *Pubbakammapiḷoti* drew his account, and his position, from non-Theravâdin schools of the “Hînayâna”.³³

Part Three: Denials of the karmic explanation of Buddha's sufferings

Whatever its original source, *Pubbakammapiḷoti* came to be included in the canon. Once included, the karmic explanation of the Buddha's suffering became the basis for a debate which raged throughout the Theravâdin commentarial period. The specific formulations and solutions to the problem are as numerous as the texts in which they are recorded. For the sake of clarity I will discuss these texts as falling into two main groups: on one hand those texts which support and elaborate the *Apadâna* position and, on the other hand, those which reject the karmic explanation of the Buddha's suffering by providing alternate causalities. Just as *Pubbakammapiḷoti* represents the former position, the latter position is represented by the Dilemmas section of the *Milindapañha*, which is the earliest text offering alternate causalities known today. I will turn attention first to the *Milindapañha* and other dissenting texts, investigating the reasons Theravâda Buddhists tried to avoid the conclusion that Buddha had bad karma and how they tried to do so. These denials of the karmic explanation must be examined first since the rebuttals to them—the subject of the next part of this paper—make sense only in light of the objections which tradition raised.

The *Milindapañha* Dilemmas generally affirm the *Apadâna* position that even spiritually advanced people might suffer because of bad karma. The antagonist Milinda asks how the great Moggallâna, if truly an arhant and chief among those skilled in the miraculous powers (*iddhi*), could have been murdered so brutally as hagiographic tradition maintains that he was. The dilemma is this: if Moggallâna was chief among those possessing *iddhi*, it must be false that he suffered so terribly. Or, if it be true that he was beaten to death with clubs, then the Buddha was mistaken in declaring him chief among those with *iddhi*. Nâgasena, the protagonist, answers

the dilemma by stating that the effects of karma are greater than anything, even arhantship and its fruits:

Even among things beyond the reach of imagination, great king, still one is in excess above the other, one more powerful than the other ... It is precisely the effect of karma which overcomes all the rest, and has them under its rule; and no other influence is of any avail to the man in whom karma is working out its inevitable end.³⁴

Good and bad karma come together even in extreme cases, as when an accomplished arhant is clubbed to death.

Another Dilemma questions whether good and bad really have different effects if the evil Devadatta could have been equal or superior to the Buddha during his previous lives (i.e. in the *Jātaka* stories). The text affirms the mixed nature of karma:

All beings in fact, O king, who, in various forms as creatures, are carried down the stream of transmigration, meet, as they are whirled along in it, both with pleasant companions and with disagreeable ones—just as water whirled along in a stream meets with pure and impure substances, with the beautiful and the ugly.³⁵

This text points out that in the *Jātaka* the Bodhisatta (though sometimes inferior) acquired much merit at the same time that Devadatta, sometimes superior, attained much demerit. It also points out that Devadatta had good karma too, even though he suffered greatly in the end. Again, good and bad karma come together. But the text makes a curious omission from the standpoint of *Pubbakammapiḷoti*: it does not affirm that the Bodhisatta had some bad karma too.

In this same vein, Dilemmas Forty-five and Forty-six deny that the Bodhisatta accumulated bad karma when he slaughtered animals for sacrifice and when he reviled the Buddha Kassapa, respectively. Although the demerit gained from slaughtering animals (Dilemma Forty-five) is not included in the *Pubbakammapiḷoti* account of Buddha's previous bad karma, it clearly represents the same kind of troublesome ascription of bad karma to the Buddha. But the *Milinda* author is able to avoid saying that the Bodhisatta heaped up bad karma by explaining the animal sacrifice as the act of a man temporarily insane:

“Now an evil act done, O king, by one out of his mind, is even in this present world not considered a grievous offence, nor is it so in respect of the fruit that it brings about in a future life.”³⁶

Suggesting this non-karmic explanation for the Bodhisatta's activities saves the *Milinda* author from admitting that the Bodhisatta had bad karma when he did the act and, more important, it saves him from admitting that the Bodhisatta did something productive of bad karma. In Dilemma Forty-six, the same problems are avoided by saying that the Bodhisatta's slander of the Buddha Kassapa "...was owing to his [Brahmin] birth and family surroundings."³⁷ Even if Dilemma Forty-five is not specifically responsive to issues raised in *Pubbakammapiṭṭi*, Dilemma Forty-six clearly is. Only in the *Apadāna* is this story told to exemplify Buddha's bad karma. *Milindapañha* admits the story, but denies that it was a karma-producing event.

Milindapañha does more than hint at disagreement with the *Pubbakammapiṭṭi*; in two Dilemmas the author addresses precisely its issues. In Dilemma Eight Milinda asks Nāgasena, "...had the Blessed One, when he became a Buddha, burnt out all evil (*akusala*)³⁸ in himself, or was there still some evil remaining in him?" Nāgasena's answer: "He had burnt out all evil. There was none left."³⁹ So just as Dilemmas Forty-five and Forty-six express disagreement with the position that in previous lives the Buddha accumulated bad karma, Dilemma Eight denies that in this life the Buddha suffered the effects of bad karma. Then Milinda asks whether the Buddha suffered bodily pain, and the monk replies that indeed he did, mentioning a number of the tradition's difficulties as regards the Buddha's suffering:

At Rājagaha a splinter of rock pressed his foot, and once he suffered from dysentery, and once when the humours of his body were disturbed a purge was administered to him, and once when he was troubled with wind the Elder who waited on him (that is Ānanda) gave him hot water.⁴⁰

Milinda's rejoinder is that since all pain is the result of karma, the Buddha must have had residual bad karma. This is a thesis which the *Milinda* author is unwilling to maintain. He cites a text in the *Samyuttanikāya* in which the Buddha says that not all bodily pain is caused by karma, that some bodily pain is the result of external causes, i.e. "Superabundance of wind, and of bile, and of phlegm, the union of these humours, variations in temperature, the avoiding of dissimilarities⁴¹ [and] external agency" in addition to karma.⁴² He argues that the pain suffered by the Buddha was due

to natural causes and thereby removes the doubt surrounding the statement that the Buddha was free of bad karma. As a second refutation he argues that the Buddha suffered as the result of another of the possibilities listed above, namely external human agency (i.e. Devadatta). Both solutions contradict the Buddha's statement in *Pubbakammaṇḍali* that these very pains were the direct result of bad karma.

Similarly, Dilemma Twenty-six concerns the rock hurled by Devadatta which splintered and injured the Buddha's foot. According to *Pubbakammaṇḍali* this was the remaining effect of the Buddha having crushed his half-brother to death with a rock in some previous existence.⁴³ The *Milindapañha*, however, treats it purely as the result of external causes. Its proximate cause was a freak of nature (the earth sent two boulders to intercept Devadatta's hurled rock but the collision happened to cause a shard to splinter off)⁴⁴ and "...the real cause of its so striking against his foot was the sorrow-working deed of that ungrateful, wicked Devadatta."⁴⁵

When we examine the Dilemmas of *Milindapañha* in their entirety, we see that these questions about whether the Bodhisatta and/or Buddha had bad karma are in fact part of a larger class of problems concerning aspects of the Buddha's Buddhahood, the veracity of which is called into question on the basis of events in the Buddha's life and teachings: How could he have been all-knowing if he admitted the schismatic Devadatta into the Order, or if he reflected on things, or if he was once persuaded by new facts? Did he once doubt, was he once angry, did he once show immodesty? Was he really Buddha if he needed to meditate? The denial of a position which explains Buddha's suffering as the effect of bad karma responds, I think, to similar questions. If he had bad karma, what guarantee is there in Buddhahood that bad karma can be overcome? If bad karma is sure to bear fruit, is it possible that his "complete going out" (*parinibbāna*) might have been illusory? The *Milinda* author seems to have a lot at stake in denying that the Buddha had bad karma. Like these other Dilemmas, the Dilemmas discussing Buddha's bad karma concern the consistency of certain dogmatic positions about the nature of Buddhahood in light of accepted hagiographic tradition. Most of the *Milindapañha* Dilemmas affirm both the hagiographical tradition or canonical

text and the position about Buddhahood which is held up as contradictory, often arriving at "solutions" through not a little casuistry. In the Dilemmas concerned with Buddha's bad karma, however, *Milindapañha* does more than provide fanciful evasions. In at least Dilemmas Eight and Twenty-six, the objection which Nāgasena defeats is itself the traditional position, the position which, according to *Pubbakammapiḷoti*, was disclosed by the Buddha himself.

The *Milinda* author may have been the first Buddhist to deny that Gotama had any bad karma, either as Bodhisatta or as Buddha, but he was certainly not the last. Buddhaghosa, in his commentary on the *Samyutta* record of the Buddha's backache, glosses the Buddha's statement that he has a backache by providing a non-karmic causal explanation for it:

Why did [the Buddha's back] pain him? The Blessed One, who had devoted himself to great exertion for six years [as an ascetic], had a great deal of bodily suffering. Then later on, at the time when he was very old, he had back trouble. That [backache] had no karmic cause (*akāraṇam etaṃ*).⁴⁶

This physiological explanation of the Buddha's backache, and statement that there was no deeper cause than asceticism in early life, contradicts directly the *Pubbakammapiḷoti* ascription of the Buddha's backache to bad karma from his former existence as a wrestler's son.

The *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā* retells several of the stories of unpleasant events in the Buddha biography without the slightest hint that Buddha's own bad karma was involved. Thus Sundarī's slander of the Buddha was caused by the jealousy of the heretics.⁴⁷ The same cause is stated for the slander by Ciñcamānavikā.⁴⁸ Here the Buddha explains that in a previous life too Ciñcamānavikā had slandered him, thus shifting the focus of the discussion from Buddha's bad karma to Ciñcamānavikā's bad karma. In this same way, *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā* retells the entire Devadatta cycle, portraying him as agent of the Buddha's suffering and shifting the focus to his bad karma.⁴⁹ Finally, this text retells the time that Buddha and the monks were forced to eat inferior food in Verañja, explaining this to have been the result of bad karma which the monks accumulated during one of the Buddha's previous lives (when, as five hundred horses, they served inferior food to other horses).⁵⁰ Whether the

result of no one's previous bad karma, of the antagonists' bad karma, or of the monks' bad karma, in the whole *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā* we find no suggestion that any of the Buddha's sufferings were the result of his own bad karma.⁵¹

The *Jātakatṭhakathā* also retells the stories of many of the times in which Buddha suffered, seemingly in order to refute the karmic explanation. Like *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā*, the *Jātaka* gives a previous karma explanation for Ciñcamānavikā's desire to slander the Buddha, not mentioning any bad karma on the part of the Buddha which made him her target.⁵² Sundarī's story is also told, again without any hint that the Buddha was suffering bad karma.⁵³ Nālāgiri's attack on the Buddha is retold, shifting the focus from the reason that Buddha was attacked to the reason that, in that instance, Ānanda reacted with heroism.⁵⁴ Similarly, the *Jātakatṭhakathā* alludes to the story of Verañja but focuses upon the equanimity displayed by the Buddha, giving a previous karma reason for that but not for his bad-luck at alms-gathering.⁵⁵

In all of these texts, we find a number of devices employed to refute the thesis that in these instances Buddha suffered as a result of bad karma. Whether the explanation be non-karmic or the karma of another, the effect is the same: the position that the Buddha did not suffer because of bad karma is upheld.

Part Four: Rebuttals affirming the karmic explanation of Buddha's sufferings

These denials of the Buddha's bad karma, in texts which scholars today recognize as central to the development of Theravāda tradition, did not satisfy all Theravāda Buddhists. Some commentators and later editors were less willing to ignore *Pubbakammapiḷoti*, which the early Theras included in the canon as authentically promulgated by the Buddha himself. That is, according to the canon, Buddha himself sided with those Buddhists favoring the karmic explanation. The texts which deny the karmic explanation never mention *Pubbakammapiḷoti*, as though it did not exist, even though their arguments clearly speak to the problems it raises. Similarly, the rebutters of those denials never mention the denials specifically, but the manner in which they elaborate the simple *Pubbakammapiḷoti* references makes clear that they are writing with those denials in mind.

The earliest such text known today is the commentator Dhammapâlâcariya's *Paramattha-Dîpanî Udânatthakathâ*, his commentary on the *Udâna* which, we recall, is the earliest canonical text telling the story of Sundarî the slanderer. That Dhammapâla supported the karmic explanation cannot be doubted:

All the [Buddha's] sufferings (*dukkhâni*), beginning with the slander of the Blessed One by deceitful women like Ciñcamânavikâ and so forth are to this extent conditioned, the remaining effects of deeds done in a former existence, which are called "karma strands" (*kammâni pilotikâni*).⁵⁶

Here Dhammapâla cites by name the *Apadâna* and proceeds to quote *Pubbakammapiḷoti* in its entirety.

But Dhammapâla does not simply affirm an old position; he affirms it in light of the denials which have been made:

[With regard to Sundarî's slanderous accusations,] it is asked, "what then was that karma?" The Master, who for an immeasurable period of time carefully heaped up a wide accumulation of merit, received harsh and untrue slander. It is said that this very Blessed One, being a Bodhisatta in a previous birth, was a scoundrel named Munâli. He served evil people, intent on fixing his attention improperly, and roamed about. One day he saw a Paccekasambuddha named Surabhi adjusting his robe to enter the city for alms. At that time various women were going with him. [Munâli] slandered, "This renunciate is a scoundrel, no celibate he." [Munâli/Buddha], because of that karma, roasted in hell for many thousands of years. As the remaining effect of that karma, now, even though he was the Buddha, he received slander because of Sundarî.⁵⁷

Dhammapâla refers his account to a debate over the cause for Sundarî's slander, and states that *even though* he was Buddha, with all the merit described by the *Jâtaka*, still the Buddha was subject to the effects of his previous bad deeds. Dhammapâla affirms the absolutivity of karma even in the case of the Buddha, thus affirming the *Pubbakammapiḷoti* position against the denials of it. There was no alternate causality; Dhammapâla's language makes this point even clearer than *Pubbakammapiḷoti* itself.

Even some of the later editors of the *Dhammapadatthakathâ* did not like the implications of its silence with regard to the Buddha's bad karma. One sub-tradition in the transmission of this text, which the Pali Text Society editor labelled "Kambodian", appends this passage to the *Dhammapadatthakathâ* account of the Ciñcamânavikâ incident:

Because of what did the Blessed One receive the slander of heretics? This is the previous karma done by the Blessed One...⁵⁸

The text gives the account of Buddha's birth as Munâli, apparently quoting from the *Apadânaṭṭhakathâ*,⁵⁹ then quotes the verses of *Pubbakammaṭṭhā* concerning Ciñcamânavikâ concluding "this is the former karma of the Master."⁶⁰

But the quintessential rebuttal to the denials that Buddha had bad karma is the commentary on *Pubbakammaṭṭhā* contained in *Visuddhajanavilâsini nâma Apadânaṭṭhakathâ*. *Pubbakammaṭṭhā* receives more attention from the commentator than any other text of the large *Apadâna* collection. The commentary contains lengthy descriptions of the previous life stories, the intermediate sufferings in hell and low states, and the stories of Buddha's sufferings in this life. In the process of this elaboration, the commentator is able to undercut the denials of the karmic explanation at the same time that he generates out of this debate some startlingly new Buddhist perspectives. The commentary on *Pubbakammaṭṭhā* is lengthy, and so I will not be able to relate all of the details it provides here. But it is worthwhile to consider some of the ways in which it modifies the *Apadâna* telling in order to affirm the karmic position despite the denials of it.

First, the order in which the stories are told is changed, so that the commentary is chronological in terms of Buddha's present life. That is, the six years' asceticism is told first (not last, as in *Pubbakammaṭṭhā*), because it preceded all the other unpleasant events chronologically. In the process of narrating these events chronologically, the commentator demonstrates that as the Bodhisatta neared his goal, and even after the great events in his life as Buddha, he continued to suffer bad karma. The juxtaposition of his progress on the Path with the effects of his previous karma drives home Dhammapâla's position that Buddha suffered *even though* he was the Buddha. Thus the narrative points out that the Bodhisatta slandered Kassapa Buddha "even though it was in the time of that very Buddha that he received his prediction [of future Buddhahood]."⁶¹ Then, the commentator continues, even after he had perfected himself in the last *jâtaka* as King Vessantara, had been born as Siddhattha, renounced his kingdom, cut off his hair and entered into austerities, he suffered the bad karma of having slandered that

same Buddha whose prediction was about to come true. The narrative continues to recall for us that he gave up asceticism after six years, sat beneath the Bodhi Tree, and became Buddha. It was after this that he received slander because of Sundarî. By describing famous events in the Buddha biography, repeatedly juxtaposing the sufferings Buddha endured, the commentary highlights the problem which had so bothered the authors of *Milindapañha* and related texts. Even as he prepared to die, as he prepared to achieve his unsurpassed *parinibbāna*, the Buddha suffered diarrhea.

Second, this commentary is the first (and in my knowledge the only) text which addresses the nature of the "badness" of the Buddha's karma. "Strands of karma" (*kammaṇḍalī*) is a euphemistic term; it always refers to bad karma but does not state such a bad case. *Pubbakammaṇḍalī* itself never provides an adjective for the karma which results in Buddha's suffering. But in the commentary, less significant deeds (like the happy mind of the fisherboy) are categorized as "unwholesome karma" (*akusalakamma*) whereas the major offences (like murdering his own half-brother out of greed) are described as "evil karma" (*pāpakamma*).

Third, the commentator sometimes deepens the karmic connection by providing previous karma explanations for the evil deeds done in the past. Thus when Jotipāla slandered Kassapa Buddha, the primary karmic force which brought it about was Kassapa's *own* previous bad karma.⁶² So it was karmically determined not only that Buddha would perform painful austerities but also that in a previous life he would slander a Buddha! Moreover, the fact of Buddhas suffering bad karma becomes universalized: not only this Buddha; previous Buddhas too suffered bad karma.

Fourth, the commentator provides previous bad karma explanations for the alternate causalities propounded by the texts described in Part Three of this paper. Thus Devadatta's enmity, which *Milinda* and other texts state to be the real cause of the Buddha's suffering at his hand, is in the commentary explained to be itself the result of Buddha, in a former life as a merchant, having cheated Devadatta of his due.⁶³ Similarly, the hatred and jealousy of the heretics is explained as a response to monks showing off their miraculous powers (before the Buddha had established the rule forbidding such displays).⁶⁴

Fifth and finally, the commentator develops out of this debate a new Buddhology. He treats *Pubbakammapiḷoti* at the beginning of the *Apadāna*, as part of the *Buddhāpadāna* section of that text. For him, the stories about bad karma and bad effects are part of the same story which tells of good karma and good effects; his is a new conception of the Buddha biography:

After asking which road to take, when “avoid the left and take the right” is said, travellers having gone by that [right] road accomplish their duties in villages, towns and royal cities; but those gone just as far in the same manner on the other, avoided, left road, also [eventually] accomplish their duties in villages, towns, etc. [once they have realized their mistake and returned to the correct road]. In just this way the *Buddhāpadāna* was set forth because [it exemplifies] the wholesome (*kusala*) *apadāna*; there is this problem karma (*pañhakkamma*) [i.e. the problems described in *Pubbakammapiḷoti*] to detail that [analogue to the left road] because [it exemplifies] the unwholesome (*akusala*) *apadāna*.⁶⁵

For the commentator, the Buddha biography is not only paradigmatic of the pleasant and ultimately liberating effects of good karma; it is also paradigmatic of every person’s ability to get onto the right road, even if he or she be the doer of bad karma. Like the travellers who, failing to heed the warning of those who know, must waste time on the wrong road before realizing their mistake and getting back on course, so the man or woman who acts evilly, not heeding the warning of the Buddha, will, like the Buddha himself, waste time suffering in hell and on earth, but in the end even that evil-doer can also get on the right road.⁶⁶

Just as the commentary on *Pubbakammapiḷoti* seeks to resolve the difficulties surrounding the karmic explanation with an innovative interpretation of Buddhahood, the final text we will consider provides an innovative twist on the theory of karma. This is the *ṭikā* on *Milindapañha*, a late medieval text which originated in a Sinhalese Mahāvihāra monastery in Thailand. In the *Milindapañha*’s explicit denial of the Buddha’s bad karma referred to above (Dilemma Eight), Nāgasena states rhetorically that Buddha’s pain must have been the result of “the fruit of karma or the deed [of Devadatta]” (*kammavipākato vā kiriyato vā ti*) and then proceeds to defend the latter position. The *ṭikā* simply explains “because of the deed” (*kiriyato*) as the deed of Devadatta, which is obvious from the context. But it glosses “because of the fruit of karma” (*kam-*

mavipākato) by quoting the *Pubbakammapiḷoti* verse in which the Buddha states that the splinter of rock injured him as the remaining effect of having murdered his half-brother.⁶⁷ The commentator does not agree with the stand taken by the *Milindapañha* in this debate:

The Thera [Nāgasena] does not have a certain explanation for this problem. Therefore having thought it out one should accept [whichever answer] is most appropriate. In that regard [I] am making this investigation: The killing on the road [by the Buddha in a previous life] produced defilements which were not laid hold of in the past, future and present. The talk about [the Buddha having experienced] the cessation of that [karma] which is laid hold of is spoken with reference to future existence. The [painful] feelings were born to the Lord in this present existence. Karma, which is to be experienced again and again, cannot be turned back even in Buddhas and Paccekabuddhas. We should therefore take [this as] the most appropriate theory as regards the Thera's [question], "were these pains [of the Buddha's] because of the fruit of the deed or were they reborn [effects of karma]?"⁶⁸

Although the Pāli is terse, the meaning is clear enough. The commentator upholds the *Pubbakammapiḷoti* position that even Buddhas must experience the effects of unrealized bad roots-of-karma. But he answers the objection of the *Milindapañha* as regards that doctrine's implications for Buddhology by affirming that "with regard to future existence" all bad karma had been exhausted. Even as Buddha, the Buddha had to finish burning up his karma. But being Buddha, this left no residue for rebirth. Thus the author of this commentary postulates a kind of karma which is only experienced, which results in no further karma. Although there are serious philosophical problems here in terms of wider issues surrounding the theory of karma, it at least allows proponents of the karmic explanation to have their cake and eat it too: the Buddha experienced bad karma, but it wasn't the kind of karma which casts doubt on cherished conceptions of Buddhahood.

This solution, that the Buddha's bad karma was a type of karma which will not come to fruition in the future, can be stated with greater technical clarity than the commentator here achieves. I became aware of this terminology when I mentioned the conflict between *Pubbakammapiḷoti* and *Milindapañha* to a Sinhalese friend, Mr. H. M. Wijeratna. He had not previously been aware of the problem, but received a classical education as a Buddhist monk and so when confronted with it could provide me a technical response.

He stated that there are four types of karma: 1) karma whose fruit will be experienced in this life; 2) karma whose fruit will be experienced in the next life; 3) karma whose fruit will be experienced in some future life and 4) karma whose fruit will not be experienced at all (*ahosikamma*, lit. ‘‘was-karma’’). The Buddha’s suffering was the result of a long distant act (karma of the third type) whose effect was *ahosikamma* (karma of the fourth type).

As far as I can tell, this four-fold classification of karma is first reported by Buddhaghosa in chapter nineteen of *Visuddhimagga*.⁶⁹ There it is reported as one of several fourfold classifications of karma preserved in the tradition and offered up as suitable meditational topics for ‘‘purification through the removal of doubt’’. Because Buddhaghosa does not give this classification in its problematic context it would be a mere guess to suggest that it was developed to answer the problem of Buddha’s bad karma. Whether it was or not, in its context that is precisely the effect it has. Although it alters the theory of karmic absolutivity, it allows for an affirmation of *Pubbakammāpiloti* which also rebuts the objections tradition has raised to it.

Conclusion

In the course of this essay I have discussed a wide range of arguments clustering around the problem of the Buddha’s bad karma. Theravāda Buddhists have used various devices in order to deny that thesis; various others were employed to affirm it. The problem is complex and, I think, unresolved. The denials of the karmic explanation not only contradict canonical statements by the Buddha himself; they also fail to explain why, even if some alternate agency caused the Buddha to suffer, the Buddha fell into those circumstances in the first place. Dhammapāla’s rebuttal does not answer the concern which we have suggested motivated these denials, namely the worry that, since karma is sure to bear fruit, the Buddha’s bad karma would necessitate a conclusion that his Buddhahood was somehow incomplete. The commentary on *Pubbakammāpiloti* answers this worry, but its innovative Buddhology causes new kinds of problems still. For example, if the Buddha biography shows that bad karma is ultimately no hindrance to Bud-

dhahood, then the Buddhist ethical system is to some degree undermined. Similarly, the *Milinda-ñikā* answers the *Milindapañha*'s concern over the implications of bad karma for Buddhology, but in modifying the theory of karmic absolutivity it too leaves us in a congeries of theoretical contradictions.⁷⁰

Theravāda Buddhism is not the only religious tradition in which the fact that the good suffer has created complex and unresolvable theoretical difficulties. The problem has appeared in many guises in the history of religions. In each instance, the problem is compelling in tradition-specific ways; it is problematic only because it challenges specific doctrines, specific soteriologies, specific forms of faith. In the case of Theravāda Buddhism, no less than any other, this problem has been particularly Buddhist, indeed particularly Theravādin. The various answers to it have been not theodicies but what we might call "Buddhodicies". Different religious traditions—even different schools of Buddhism—have struggled with similar problems, but operating in different cultural contexts with different presuppositions, they arrived at very different formulations of the problem and solutions to it. This essay has attempted to detail the problem in its specifically Theravāda Buddhist formulation, since we can only appreciate why the Buddha's bad karma has proven unresolvably problematic in the context of the tradition which debated it.

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¹ F. L. Woodward, tr., *The Minor Anthologies of the Pali canon* Part II (London: Oxford University Press, 1948) p. 52-54 (*Sacred Books of the Buddhists*, VIII). This text may have originated in the early *Dhammapada* commentarial tradition since the story glosses as an *udāna Dhammapada* 306, a verse stating that slanderers will suffer in future lives. The *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā* glosses this verse with the Sundarī story as well, in very similar form. The verse is also included as *Suttanipāta* 660 (*Kokāliyasuttaṃ* v. 5), again in the context of slanderous lies but without reference to Sundarī.

² See E. B. Cowell, tr., *The Jātaka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births* Volume Two (London: Luzac, 1969 repr.) p. 283-85; H. C. Norman, ed., *The Commentary on the Dhammapada* Volume III (London: P.T.S., 1912) p. 474ff; C. E. Godakumbura, ed., *Visuddhajanavilāsini nāma Apadānaṭṭhakathā* (London: P.T.S., 1954) p. 120-121.

³ E. B. Cowell, tr., *The Jātaka ...*, op. cit., Volume Two, p. 116-117; C. E. Godakumbura, ed., *Visuddhajanavilāsini nāma Apadānaṭṭhakathā*, op. cit., p. 118-119; H. C. Norman, ed., *The Commentary on the Dhammapada*, op. cit., Volume III, p. 178ff; M. M. Bose, ed., *Paramattha-Dīpani Iti-Vuttakaṭṭhakathā (Iti-Vuttaka Commentary) of Dhammapālācariya* Volume I (London: P.T.S., 1934) p. 86.

⁴ T. W. Rhys Davids and Hermann Oldenberg, trs., *Vinaya Texts* Part III (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1969[1885]) p. 224ff.

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 245.

⁶ *ibid.*, p. 246.

⁷ *piṭṭham me āgilāyati/piṭṭhi me āgilāyati*; see V. Trenckner, ed., *The Majjhimanikāya* Volume One (London: P.T.S., 1888) p. 354 (*Sekhasuttaṃ*) and M. Leon Feer, ed. *Samyutta-nikāya* Part IV (*Salāyatana-vagga*) (London: P.T.S., 1894) p. 184.

⁸ T. W. Rhys Davids, tr., *Dialogues of the Buddha* Part Two (London: P.T.S., 1959[1910]) p. 106. The text continues to state that “the Exalted One, mindful and self-possessed, bore them [his pains] without complaint.”

⁹ *ibid.*, p. 138-139. Here too he does not complain about the discomfort: “He bore with fortitude the pain,/the sharp pain even unto death//.”

¹⁰ M. Leon Feer, ed., *Samyutta-nikāya*, Part One (*Sagātha-vagga*) (London: P.T.S., 1884) p. 27 (my translation).

¹¹ References to these austerities and their debilitating effect upon the Bodhisatta's body are scattered throughout the canon. See for example V. Trenckner, ed., *The Majjhima-nikāya* Volume I (London: P.T.S., 1888) p. 77ff. (*Mahāsīhanādasuttaṃ*) and p. 240ff. (*Mahāsaccakasuttaṃ*).

¹² Hermann Oldenberg, ed., *Vinaya Piṭakam: One of the Principal Buddhist Holy Scriptures in the Pāli Language* Volume III (London: Williams and Norgate, 1881) p. 1-11 (*Pārājikam* of the *Suttavibhanga*, I. 1ff.).

¹³ Heinz Bechert has suggested a novel hypothesis to explain this displacement, that the *Apadāna* collator tried to fill out the number of Thera-biographies to 550, in order to parallel the *Jātaka*. See Heinz Bechert, “Über Das Apadānabuch” in E. Frauwallner, hrsg., *Wiener Zeitschrift Für Die Kunde Süd- Und Ostasiens Und Archiv Für Indische Philosophie* Band II (Wien: Verlag Brüder Hollinek, 1958) p. 11-14. I think it equally possible that the final editors of the *Apadāna* were of the party which denied that Buddha had bad karma, and that the text was made to be a monk's biography to undermine its association with the Buddha himself.

¹⁴ For text see Mary E. Lilley, ed., *The Apadāna of the Khuddaka Nikāya* Volume One (London: P.T.S., 1925) p. 299-301 v. 1-2. Although I will cite Lilley's edition throughout, it is highly flawed and in great need of re-editing. I have relied in my translations herein on two editions in Sinhala script: Ven. Pandit Walagedara Somaloka Tissa Nāyaka Thero, ed., *Apadānapāli of Suttanta Piṭaka* (Colombo: Hewawitarne Bequest, 1957) and Ven. Pandita Talalle Dhammananda Thera, ed., *Apadānapāli* (Government of Ceylon, 1961) (*Buddha Jayanti Tripiṭaka Series Volume XXXVI*). C. E. Godakumbura, ed., *Visuddhajanavilāsini nāma Apadānaṭṭhakathā* (London: P.T.S., 1954) has also been used in emending Lilley's text.

¹⁵ *Apadāna*, op. cit., p. 299-301 v. 4-6.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, v. 7-9.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, v. 10-14.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, v. 15-16.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, v. 17-18.

²⁰ *ibid.*, v. 19-20.

²¹ *ibid.*, v. 21-22.

²² *ibid.*, v. 23-24.

²³ *ibid.*, v. 25-26.

²⁴ *ibid.*, v. 27. Compare Godakumbura, ed., *Visuddhajanavilâsini nâma Apadânaṭṭhakathâ*, op. cit., p. 126.

²⁵ *ibid.*, v. 28.

²⁶ *ibid.*, v. 29-32.

²⁷ In the Sanskrit tradition, however, bad karma causing bad results and good karma causing good results are equally constitutive of the parallel *Avadâna* genre.

²⁸ See E. B. Cowell and R. A. Neil, eds., *The Divyâvadâna, A Collection of Early Buddhist Legends* (Cambridge: at the University Press, 1886) p. 87 line 8, p. 150 line 24, p. 241 line 26. This term is also used often in *Avadânaśataka*. See J. S. Speyer, ed., *Avadânaśataka: A Century of Edifying Tales, Belonging to the Hinayâna Volume One* (Tokyo: Meicho-Funyû-Kay, 1977 [1902-1906]) (*Bibliotheca Buddhica, III*) p. 242 line 9, p. 246 line 9, p. 249 line 13, p. 253 line 6, p. 257 line 8, p. 267 line 14, p. 275 line 12.

²⁹ *Divyâvadâna*, op. cit., p. 150: *Anavatapte mahâsarasi śrâvakaiḥ sârdham pûrvikâ karmaṣlotir vyâkritâ bhavati*. Anavatapta is, of course, the Sanskrit equivalent of Anotatta, where the Pâli text is said to have been disclosed to the monks.

³⁰ The text in question is the *Ghaṭikârasuttaṃ*, included in the *Majjhimanikâya* as number eighty-one. In it, Jotipâla the Brahmin (the Bodhisatta) is a friend of the devoted potter Ghaṭikâra during the time of Kassapa Buddha. Ghaṭikâra encourages his friend to visit that Buddha, but the Bodhisatta refuses with the words which *Pubbakammaṭṭhiloti* calls "slandereous". In the *Majjhima* version, however, no such suggestion is made. Instead, Ghaṭikâra convinces Jotipâla to visit the Buddha, and Jotipâla henceforth lays the foundation for his own future Buddhahood. A very similar recension of the story is also found in the *Mahâvastu*. Compare J. J. Jones, tr., *The Mahâvastu Volume One* (London: Luzac, 1949) p. 267ff. (*Sacred Books of the Buddhists, Volume XVI*).

³¹ J. J. Jones, tr., *The Mahâvastu Volume One* (London: Luzac, 1949) p. 29ff.

³² The karmic connection is not as direct as in the Pâli. The woman slandered as Sarvâbhibhu's disciple's lover vows at that time to slander the Bodhisattva in return, repeatedly, until he reaches final enlightenment. See *ibid.*, p. 38.

³³ Bechert, op. cit., p. 10-11 (esp. n. 34) discusses another Sanskrit parallel, the *Anavataptagâthâ*, which he says is part of the Lhasa-Kanjur *Vinaya*. This substantiates the general point being made here, that *Pubbakammaṭṭhiloti* appears to be based on a non-Theravâdin textual tradition.

³⁴ T. W. Rhys Davids, tr., *The Questions of King Milinda* (Varanasi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1982[1890]) Part One, p. 261-262. (*Sacred Books of the East, Volumes 35-36*).

³⁵ *ibid.*, Part One, p. 292.

³⁶ *ibid.*, Part Two, p. 18-19.

³⁷ *ibid.*, Part Two, p. 20.

³⁸ The tradition has used both *akusala* and *pâpa* to denote the "bad" in Buddha's karma. In the commentary on the *Apadâna*, *akusalakamma* refers to less-

grievous offences (like when, as the son of a fisherman, the Bodhisatta smiled at the fishermen's catch), reserving *pāpakamma* for the truly awful acts like when the Bodhisatta, greedy for his inheritance, crushed his own half-brother to death with a rock.

³⁹ *The Questions of King Milinda*, op. cit., Volume One, p. 190-91.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p. 191.

⁴¹ Professor Lily de Silva has suggested (personal communication) that the term, *visamparihâraja*, actually refers to the toxic mixture of two otherwise harmless substances.

⁴² *ibid.*, p. 191-2.

⁴³ See *Āpadāna*, op. cit., Volume One, p. 300, v. 15-16.

⁴⁴ *Questions of King Milinda*, op. cit., Volume One, p. 249-50.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p. 251.

⁴⁶ F. L. Woodward, ed., *Sārattha-ppakāsini, Buddhaghosa's Commentary on the Saṃyutta-nikāya* Volume III (London: P.T.S., 1937) p. 52 (my translation). In his commentary on the *Majjhima*, Buddhaghosa repeats this same passage, but the text differs slightly. The addition of "or" (*vā*) in the final line gives the passage a different thrust: either the cause of this backache was asceticism in early life or else there was no cause at all. See I. B. Horner, ed., *Paṇāśasūdanī Majjhimanikāyaṭṭhakathā of Buddhaghosācariya* Part III (London: P.T.S., 1933) p. 28 (*Sekhasutta-vanṇanā*). Of course in terms of the topic at hand, this textual variation is insignificant. Whichever reading we take to be Buddhaghosa's own, it is clear that he did not accept the karmic explanation of Buddha's sufferings; if the *Majjhima* commentary reading is uncorrupted, Buddhaghosa went beyond even the alternate causality position in allowing the possibility that Buddha suffered for no reason at all!

⁴⁷ H. C. Norman, ed., *The Commentary on the Dhammapada* Volume III (London: P.T.S., 1912) p. 474ff.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, p. 178ff.

⁴⁹ H. C. Norman, ed., *The Commentary on the Dhammapada* Volume I (London: P.T.S., 1906) p. 133ff.

⁵⁰ H. C. Norman, ed., *The Commentary on the Dhammapada* Volume II (London: P.T.S., 1911) p. 154-155.

⁵¹ A much later appendix to this text, however, quotes the *Pubbakammapiṭṭhi* tradition in explaining the reason for Ciñcamānavikā's slander of the Buddha. See below, note 58.

⁵² E. B. Cowell, tr., *The Jātaka ...*, op. cit., Volume IV, p. 187ff.

⁵³ *ibid.*, Volume II, p. 415ff.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, Volume V, p. 175ff.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, Volume III, p. 294.

⁵⁶ F. L. Woodward, ed., *Paramattha-Dīpanī Udānaṭṭhakathā (Udāna Commentary) of Dhammapālācariya* (London: P.T.S., 1926) p. 263 (my translation).

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, (my translation).

⁵⁸ H. C. Norman, ed., *The Commentary on the Dhammapada* Volume III, op. cit., p. 512 (my translation).

⁵⁹ Compare Godakumbura, ed., *Visuddhajanavilāsini nāma Āpadānaṭṭhakatha*, op. cit., p. 119.

⁶⁰ H. C. Norman, ed., *The Commentary on the Dhammapada* Volume III, op. cit., p. 512.

⁶¹ Godakumbura, ed., *Visuddhajanavilāsini nāma Āpadānaṭṭhakathā*, op. cit., p. 114.

⁶² *ibid.*: *tassa [Kassapa] Bhagavato pilotikakammanissandena.*

⁶³ *ibid.*, p. 121-122.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, p. 115ff.

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p. 114 (my translation).

⁶⁶ The notion that Buddha's paradigmatic life extends into this exemplary arena is not unique to our text. Buddhaghosa conceives much of the Buddha biography in the *Ariyapariyesanasuttaṃ* as such a negative example, the Buddha preaching it in order to demonstrate first-hand what ought not be done. He even uses this same analogy, of the traveller asking directions. See Buddhaghosa's commentary on the *Ariyapariyesanasuttaṃ* called "Explanation of the *Sermon on the Heap of Snares*" (*Pāsārāsīsuttavāṇanā*) in J. H. Woods and D. Kosambi, eds., *Papañcasūdanī Majjhimanikāyaṭṭhakathā of Buddhaghosācariya* Part II (London: P.T.S., 1979) p. 169-170. But here the Buddha describes only his unproductive strivings in the present life, not counter-productive ones as in *Pubbakammapiḷoti*. I know of no text other than that under discussion which specifically portrays the Buddha's previous evil and present suffering as paradigmatic of every person's chance to gain enlightenment.

⁶⁷ Padmanabh S. Jaini, ed., *Milinda-ṭikā* (London: P.T.S., 1961) p. 26 (my translation).

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p. 26-27 (my translation).

⁶⁹ A germinal form of this developed idea is a short section of the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* entitled "Karma-talk" (*Kammakathā*). It states that karma-which-was (*ahosikamma*) might or might not have borne fruit previously, might or might not be bearing fruit presently, and might or might not bear fruit in the future. The same is true of karma-which-is (*atthikamma*) and karma-which-will-be (*bhavissatikamma*). The text repeats its terse diagnosis for the range of types of karma: wholesome, unwholesome, blameworthy, not blameworthy, etc. So karma of the past, present and future, and all types of karma, might not bear fruit. Here *ahosi* is not used in a technical sense, however, but as a verb. For the use of the term in its technical sense we still must credit Buddhaghosa with being the first. For text of the *Kammakathā* see Arnold C. Taylor, ed., *Paṭisambhidāmagga* Volume Two (London: P.T.S., 1905) p. 78-79.

⁷⁰ For a recent discussion of some of the theoretical problems raised by *ahosikamma* see Richard Gombrich, *Precept and Practice* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971) p. 214-17.

AUFSTIEG UND NIEDERGANG
DER RÖMISCHEN WELT, II

(Review article)

A. WASSERSTEIN

Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt, II: 16.3 (1986); 18.1 (1986); 19.1-2 (1979); 21.1-2 (1984); ed. Wolfgang Haase, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin and New York.

These volumes deal, respectively, with various aspects of Roman religion, with religion in the provinces, and with Judaism, both Palestinian and hellenistic. The papers contained in them cover a period of about four centuries, examining subjects as diverse as the attitudes and policies of various emperors towards religion; religion in literature, philosophical as well as poetic (e.g. a paper by D.P. Harmon on Religion in the Latin Elegists and a discussion by J. Turpin of Cicero, *de legibus*, I-II); and such interesting themes as priesthoods and priestly careers in Ancient Rome; magical rites in Roman antiquity; the sociology of religious knowledge in the Roman Empire to A.D. 284; the origins of the imperial cult; the gods, fate and divination in Latin literature of the first Christian century; iconography and archaeology of religion; Roman religion in Spain under the Principate. Some contributions are of full booklength (e.g. J. Linderski on *The Augural Law*; M. Clavel-Lévêque, *L'espace des jeux dans le monde romain*; E. Birley, *The Deities of Roman Britain*; J.M. Blásquez, *Einheimische Religionen Hispaniens in der römischen Kaiserzeit*; A.-B. Follmann-Schulz, *Die römischen Tempelanlagen in der Provinz Germania inferior*). All this and a great deal more is found in the first two of the volumes noticed here, 16.3 and 18.1. It is clear that the mere enumeration of the titles of the papers published in these volumes would exhaust all the space that even the most opulent publishers and the most generous editors could allow; and their (very welcome) variety is such that even a summary, let alone a critical discussion, of many of them would be beyond the competence of this reviewer, who must therefore con-

fine himself to discussing only a few of these papers, which together represent and illustrate both the high quality and the rich variety of the works offered in this series.

In an important, interesting and elegant paper on 'The Independent Value of Ancient Religious Translations' David N. Wigtil ranges over a wide field including not only biblical (and similar) versions in various ancient languages but also such texts as Virgil's Fourth Eclogue (of which we have a Greek version in the *Oratio Constantini ad Sanctorum Coetum*), the Greek version of the *Res Gestae* of Augustus, and texts on leaden cursing tablets.

Wigtil points to the value of such versions going beyond their usefulness for the reconstruction or the textual criticism and the understanding of the original text. We are reminded that the translator addresses a new audience, different from that which the original author had in mind; and that he endeavours to transmit to it his own understanding of the message offered by his *Vorlage*; his message may be, and indeed in some very important cases is, quite unlike that of the text he is translating. One naturally thinks of the transformations of Hebrew prophecies at the hands of Christian translators (and, one must add, Christian copyists and editors) not only in their own translations, such as the Vulgate, but in their editions of translations originally made by Jews, such as the Septuagint and, possibly, the Peshitta.¹ We learn from the translations not only what the first author wrote, but also how the translator wished the text to be understood for purposes unconnected with the authorial intention. Thus, Wigtil argues, the version becomes to some extent a separate creation, in which the translator leaves "an imprint... as personal and clear as that which the first author left on the original". Hence the versions deserve our study and engage our attention in their own right. They tell us of translators' (or editors') cultic concerns and doctrinal preoccupations. Since the translator adds his purposes to those of the author Wigtil feels justified in concluding that "by its very nature the version is more purposeful than the original".

The translators' concerns and purposes become apparent in the format of the translations, in the techniques used, in the often idiosyncratic formulations in the target language (modelled on what are legitimate usages in the source language) and in the use of loan-

words, occasionally even in the original script (cf. the Tetragrammaton written in archaic Hebrew characters in the fragments of Aquila's Greek version found in the Cairo Genizah). There are clear attempts to remain as faithful as possible to the original, e.g. certain Latinisms in Greek translations from the Latin, such as the dative (sic) absolute instead of the correct Greek genitive absolute as a translation of the Latin ablative absolute (due to the frequent similarity, in Latin, between dative and ablative forms); or the attempt, in Syriac versions from the Greek, to translate the article by demonstrative or personal pronouns; or the endeavour, again in Syriac versions from the Greek, to distinguish direct from indirect objects both of which are normally indicated by the same prepositional prefix in Syriac. The reader will, of course, think of the most famous, or notorious, instance of the insistence on "exact" reproduction of the original, in the practice of Aquila of rendering the Hebrew **אִתּוֹ** by the Greek **σύν** (followed by the accusative!), not only where the Hebrew word means "with" but also in the far more numerous instances where it simply indicates that the word following it is to be understood as the direct object.

Wigtil points to the contrast with the practice of diverging from the original text for a variety of causes and purposes. This practice results in omissions from or additions to the text as translated. Among the few instances of translation techniques discussed in some detail Wigtil cites the illuminating example of the *Res Gestae* of Augustus (Greek version), where in the midst of what seem to be consistent renditions of the same Latin word by the same Greek word the exceptions show a clear tendency: thus, the Roman *exercitus* is always **στράτευμα**, but not so the army of the Dacians, which is called **δύναμις**. *Populus*, when referring to the Roman people, is translated by **δῆμος**, but *Germanorum populi* become **ἔθνη Γερμανῶν**.² The tendency is unmistakable; and it is this tendency that determines the choice of the idiom. Similarly the Greek version of Virgil's Fourth Eclogue changes the future tenses of the Latin original into present and past tenses: the poem is now to be read not as a prophecy of the imminent arrival of the Saviour but rather as a pagan witness to His coming.

Of equal interest are Wigtil's short remarks on ancient opinions concerning the problems of translating from one language into

another. He discusses in particular the sixteenth tractate of the *Corpus Hermeticum* (where the extant Greek text pretends to be a translation from the indigenous Egyptian language); the *Letter of Aristeas*, which purports to be an account of how the Pentateuch came to be translated into Greek; and the prologue to the Greek translation of *Ecclesiasticus*, written by the translator, the grandson of the author Jesus b. Sira. This last is potentially the most important of the three examples given here since it is the only one of the three which deals with the real problems of translating discussed by the real translator himself. The paper ends with a short note on modern translations. Here, too, Wigtil finds that “the controlling factor is the translator’s opinion of the value of the text”; and modern Bible translations are treated as evidence for the religious thought of their authors.

This enlightening and engaging paper is tantalizingly brief. Though to a large extent it discusses problems of translation in the abstract and cites examples mainly as illustrations of classificatory principles, it is done uncommonly well, and the very fact that the reader wishes for more fleshing out of the discussion is a testimony to the clarity, penetration and persuasiveness that Wigtil brings to bear on his case. The well-chosen, well-organized and up-to-date bibliography will whet the appetite of the reader and guide him to further exploration.

Volume II.18.1 is devoted to the study of paganism in the provinces of the Empire. It deals almost exclusively with the western provinces, Britain, Gaul, Spain and Germany. Oriental religions are touched upon only in so far as they appear in the West (cf. the papers by M. Bandala Galán, ‘Die orientalischen Religionen Hispaniens in vorrömischer und römischer Zeit’; R. Turcan, ‘Les religions orientales en Gaule narbonnaise et dans la vallée du Rhône’; E. Schwertheim, ‘Die orientalischen Religionen im römischen Deutschland’). It is in the nature of things that the material in the papers collected in this volume is heavily weighted on the side of archaeology rather than on that of literary evidence. Nevertheless, the latter, where it is available, is not neglected.

In a characteristically learned and thorough paper (‘Pagan Cults in the Province of Belgica’) the late Edith Wightman surveys the evidence we have for religious practice and belief in the province

named in the title. This evidence consists of votive reliefs and sculptures, ca. 400 inscriptions, bronze and terracotta statuettes, and architectural remains, as well as some admittedly scrappy information from ancient authors writing in Latin and Greek, who mostly seem to have thought of the Gauls as deeply religious, indeed superstitious, people. Cicero and Caesar (and others who probably depend on Posidonius) tell us of the Druids, performing priestly as well as judicial functions, men of aristocratic background who are not to be confused with bards and soothsayers. Their doctrines are reported to have included speculations on the heavens and the earth, similar to those of some Greek philosophers. One is tempted to suspect that authors writing in Latin and in Greek were reading doctrines known to them from their own background into their representation of Celtic religion; that the barbarically thoughtless courage of the Gauls was explained by their reported belief in metempsychosis may be one illustration of this tendency.

Caesar ("with his usual deceptive ludicity", as E. Wightman says) describes the Gaulish Pantheon as being inhabited by, among others, Mercury, Apollo, Mars, Jupiter and Minerva, a suspiciously Roman-sounding divine world; from Lucan we learn [the latinized forms of] the Gaulish names of the principal divinities. We hear also of Dispatēr, god of the underworld: his connection with darkness is said to have been responsible for the calendarically important fact that days, months and years were thought of as beginning with nightfall rather than with daybreak. In another context, among the Sequani, at Coligny and the Lac d'Antre, it is Mars who seems to have functioned as guardian of the calendar. Edith Wightman pertinently observes (p. 585) that the Coligny calendar indicates that efforts were made to reconcile a Celtic lunar year with a Roman solar year; she suggests that this may be evidence for a priesthood by no means devoid of learning.

Wightman emphasizes that the literary evidence is not only scanty; it suffers from two other shortcomings: it tends to sensationalism, as witnessed by the interest in reports of human sacrifices; and it is always liable to the suspicion of Romanizing the material known to Roman authors. Hence the quasi-Roman pantheon of the Gauls. On the other hand, we should pay heed to her salutary reminder that the phenomenon of acculturation

manifesting itself in the massive adoption of Roman deities by the native inhabitants will, by way of adaptation and conflation, have much to do with the Roman character of Gaulish divinities and thus justify to some extent the *interpretatio romana*.

Archaeological evidence is very much richer than literary testimony. But it too suffers from unavoidable shortcomings: not only from the fact that stones (or bronze, or terracotta, or precious metals) do not, after all, really speak; but, as Wightman points out, also from the typical biases of archeological remains, uneven geographical distribution, and the less accidental but equally inevitable tendency of most, even if not all, architectural, ornamental, figurative, and monumental evidence to be connected with the richer classes. She wisely reminds us, however, that artisans, too, and villagers could sometimes erect stone monuments, and that inscriptions not infrequently refer to people of the poorer classes. The beliefs and practices of the latter are most clearly expressed in inexpensive terracotta statuettes and in occasionally preserved wooden statues. Even then, she warns us, we are scarcely at the grassroots of superstitious practices; these, e.g. perishable offerings of food, flowers and the like, or the visiting of sacred places (hills, rocks, trees or springs), will have left no permanent traces. In such cases she considers, with due caution, references to such practices by later (sometimes much later) Christian writers as well as existing local custom and folklore which may contain ancient survivals.

The impression left on Wightman by the examination of the evidence is that while it was only to be expected that some ancestral beliefs and practices should survive in Roman Gaul it was equally natural that Roman equivalents should be adopted, adapted and conflated with what had been inherited from the pre-Roman past. She also notes the parallel adoption of Roman art-forms and with them at least the names of Roman deities. The unprecedented scale of such borrowing seems to need explanation, since Roman paganism was not a proselytizing force; and Wightman offers a partial answer: Gaulish receptivity to new forms and names is connected with the flexibility shared by Gaulish and Roman paganism. Though not imposed by the Romans Roman gods were introduced by Roman conquest; and some cultic practices, such as the cult of Rome and Augustus, and generally the imperial cults, were clearly

connected with Roman domination. At dates which are not certainly established but which may be as early as the end of the first century Mithraism came to Gaul and Germany, possibly with the Roman armies; though, as Wightman sensibly remarks, it is not easy to see how such origins could lead in a straight line to the Mithraea of the second and third centuries whose worshippers were largely civilians. Similar problems arise with regard to the cult of Cybele; and other oriental deities are sporadically attested. In general, Wightman remarks, oriental cults that were readily adopted from the second century onwards had by then been modified by their diffusion in the Empire.

Study of epigraphic evidence, especially of nomenclature, suggests that the vast majority of worshippers who can be identified from inscriptions were Gallo-Romans rather than newcomers; the few who were of definitely non-Gallic origin tend to be Roman administrative or military personnel. Here and there some *peregrini* or *negotiatores* are found.

In summing up Wightman finds that Romanization was not total; in the upper reaches of society she notes a uniquely Gallo-Roman provincial synthesis which may be the outcome of "the adaptation of religious manifestation to a modified society".

This paper excels in that thorough learning, comprehensiveness, balance and good sense that all who knew her had come to expect from Edith Wightman. Her tragic death before it was published was as great a loss to scholarship as it was to her colleagues and friends.

Volume II.19.1-2, notable for the soundness of the scholarship displayed by the various contributors, has much to offer the student of early Judaism, that is to say the religion of the Jewish people in the post-biblical period.³ Thus, readers will find here inter alia studies of Jewish thought in the intertestamentary period (P. Sacchi, 'Da Qohelet al tempo di Gesù'), Jewish Law (B.S. Jackson, 'The Concept of Religious Law in Judaism'), paganism in Jewish sources (M. Hadas-Lebel, 'Le paganisme à travers les sources rabbiniques des IIe et IIIe siècles'), Judaism in pagan literature (B. Wardy, 'Jewish Religion in Pagan Literature during the Late Republic and Early Empire') and other papers, e.g. on pseudepigrapha, on the Sabbath in the Roman world, on

synagogues, on Qumran, on Midrash; two important papers on Yavneh (J. Neusner, 'The Formation of Rabbinic Judaism' and P. Schäfer, 'Die Flucht Johanan b. Zakkais aus Jerusalem und die Gründung des "Lehrhauses" in Jabne'), and papers on messianism and apocalyptic writings.

Ithamar Gruenwald in a paper entitled 'Jewish Apocalyptic Literature' examines what he defines as a literature of protest, which also contains the message of hope. Such literature arose in a world in which the Jewish people had lost their political freedom and saw their religion threatened. What was lost or threatened in this world and at this time was, so one might console oneself, recoverable in another world or at some future time. Redemption is a central interest in apocalyptic literature, which flourished during the period after the Roman conquest but had its beginnings earlier, at a time when, so far from being the enemy, Rome was thought of as an ally against the Seleucid empire. About a century after Judas Maccabaeus is said to have concluded an alliance with Rome Pompey conquered the Holy Land. In the next century the Romans destroyed the Second Commonwealth; and the century after that saw the collapse of the Bar Kokhba revolt. Thus Rome, which as the "Fourth Empire" of the Book of Daniel had been expected to bring salvation and freedom and the beginning of the messianic age, was felt to be performing a different role altogether; and the messianic hopes of Israel had to find another focus elsewhere, perhaps in Persia, rival and enemy of Rome, perhaps in some completely different, other-worldly, sphere. Jewish apocalyptic writings reflect political changes, national fears and hopes, dissolving and newly-forming views of history. History, if despair was to be avoided, had to have meaning. To see the meaning one had to see history in its totality, from its beginning in Creation to its end in Redemption. Thus, and only thus, could the tribulations of the people of God be understood as way stations on the road to the end of time: and thus also the domination of the powers of this world could be understood as temporal and hence also temporary, destined to come upon the world but equally destined to disappear. It is the urgent interest in seeing this disappearance of the evil power that inspires the apocalyptic writers to a greater or lesser degree of activist intervention or the decision to stand aside and

await the coming of salvation; Gruenwald concludes that in most cases apocalyptic writing lacked the weight and strength of political arguments that instigate deeds; and, though it fuelled resentment, it inspired hope rather than action.

Gruenwald sees one of the great problems in the study of Jewish apocalyptic in the elusiveness of the subject matter. On the one hand apocalyptic writing models itself on Scripture; on the other it goes far beyond it. It imitates biblical prophecy in foretelling the future, but, unlike the Bible, instead of putting prophecies into the mouth of a contemporary prophet, it ascribes them to a figure of remote antiquity, such as Adam or Enoch or Noah or one of the patriarchs or biblical prophets. Equally characteristic of apocalyptic literature is the idiosyncratic mode of revelation claimed by the writer: heavenly ascents, the disclosure of secrets not revealed in the Bible and the role of angels (towards whom, G. points out, Scripture had been somewhat more cautious: their existence might have been considered a threat to pure monotheism); and thus, G. says, one may say that apocalyptic literature aspires to transcending Scripture; not only because it deals with experiences and modes of revelation hitherto not known to Scripture but especially because it claims to offer solutions to problems left unanswered by Scripture. Apocalyptic literature is concerned both with the past and with the future: thus it is close to both prophecy and wisdom literature and, indeed, it contains elements of both. On the other hand, it goes beyond prophecy in looking for redemption not at some future time which may be possibly near at hand but is in any case envisaged within history, but rather at the end of time, not within history but beyond it. This may serve as a neat distinction between some kinds of messianism and apocalyptic.

As one would expect in a paper on apocalyptic literature, a good deal of space is devoted to discussing pseudepigraphy, apocrypha, canonicity, *Sepharim* *Hitsonim*, prophecy and eschatology. Though here and there one feels that the author is arguing at times about the modern usage of these terms (and its legitimacy) rather than about their substance there is much to be learned here.

The Palestinian Talmud and the Babylonian Talmud are crucial to all Judaistic studies. They are basic to the study of *Halakha*, the centrepiece of rabbinic Judaism; and, as has been recognised more

and more in recent generations of scholars, PT and BT contain the principal literary documentation for the history of the Jewish people, both in the homeland and in the Diaspora, in the period after the destruction of the Second Commonwealth. One therefore welcomes with especial warmth two excellent papers (in the second part of vol. II, 19) on these two bodies of text: B.M. Bokser offers a booklength 'Annotated Bibliographical Guide to the Study of the Palestinian Talmud' and D. Goodblatt a somewhat shorter but still very substantial paper on the 'Babylonian Talmud'. The reader is given here far more than merely bibliographical help (though the authors provide veritable riches of bibliographical material). Both papers address themselves to specialists as well as to scholars in neighbouring disciplines, and both deal with such question as text and textual criticism, redaction and sources, manuscripts, relationship to other rabbinic material, methods employed in talmudic discussion, editions, commentaries, translations and a great deal more. It can be confidently predicted that all future scholarly preoccupation with critical work on the two Talmudim will have much need of and much use for these two papers.

The two parts of volume II.21.1-2 (*Hellenistisches Judentum in römischer Zeit*) are devoted to Philo and Josephus respectively. They both begin with introductions to the writers and their works (S. Sandmel; L.H. Feldman). Feldman includes a great deal of bibliographical material in his 'Flavius Josephus Revisited'; and Sandmel's 'Philo Judaeus: An Introduction to the Man, his Writings and his Significance' is supplemented by two bibliographical studies (E. Hilgert, 'Bibliographia Philoniana 1935-1981', and P. Borgen, 'Philo of Alexandria. A Critical and Synthetical Survey of Research since World War II'). There are a number of papers on Philo as an interpreter, on Philo's rhetoric, ethics and politics, and on Philo's influence on Christian exegesis of Scripture (cf. F. Trisoglio, 'Filone Alessandrino e l'esegesi cristiana' [with special reference to Gregory of Nazianzus]. and H. Savon, 'Saint Ambroise et saint Jérôme, lecteurs de Philon'). The Josephus volume has a further contribution by F. Trisoglio, 'L'intervento divino nelle vicende umane dalla storiografia classica greca a Flavio Giuseppe e ad Eusebio di Cesarea', as well as papers by H.R. Moehring, 'Joseph ben Matthia and Flavius Josephus: the Jewish

prophet and Roman Historian'; O. Michel, 'Die Rettung Israels und die Rolle Roms nach den Reden im Bellum Judaicum'; and H. Schreckenberg, 'Josephus und die christliche Wirkungsgeschichte seines Bellum Iudaicum'.

In a paper on 'Philo and Gnosticism' Birger A. Pearson discusses the perennially interesting problems of Gnosticism, its history, its origins, its essence and its relation to Judaism. Was Philo influenced by gnostic thought? Was he one of the originators of gnostic heresies? These and similar questions have been asked in various ways for over a century. The difficulty that faces scholars who address themselves to these questions is partly one of dating. How early are the testimonies that we have about any recognizably gnostic ideologies? Some scholars have preferred to see in Philo a forerunner of Gnosticism but not, of course, himself a full-blown gnostic nor even a thinker whose thought had, by logical necessity, to issue into the resentments, religious and moral deformation, theological madness and intellectual abdication that characterized so much of the medley that goes under the honourable name of *gnosis*. For one reason or another this hodgepodge has fascinated not only ancient Christian theologians—who, after all, were dealing with real dangers to the purity of their faith and the legitimacy of their church—but also some of the acutest minds among modern scholars, both Jews and Christians.

Pearson introduces the survey of modern scholarship on his subject with an admission: "that *some* relationship exists between Gnosticism and the religious philosophy of Philo can hardly be doubted". One does not wish to quarrel with this, as long as one remembers that it can equally not be doubted that there exists *some* relationship between Gnosticism and practically everything that had been written by Jews (and that was available in Greek), the whole of the Old Testament for instance. It is a far cry from this to seeing a specific link between Gnosticism and Philo.

Thus, there is no real need to see in Philo's undoubted yearning for a mystical knowledge of God a prefiguration of gnostic aspirations that go far beyond what is natural in the prophetic tradition of Israel in which Philo has his place. A passage which has been quoted from Philo in order to establish the case for a link in fact demonstrates the weakness of the argument for Philo as a gnostic

avant la lettre: *de praem.* 43-4: εἰ δέ τινες ἐδυνήθησαν αὐτὸν ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ καταλαβεῖν ἐτέρῳ μηδενὶ χρησάμενοι λογισμῷ συνεργῷ πρὸς τὴν θεάν, ἐν ὁσίοις καὶ γνησίοις θεραπευταῖς καὶ θεοφιλέσιν ὡς ἀληθῶς ἀναγραφέσθωσαν. τούτων ἐστὶν ὁ Χαλδαῖστὶ μὲν προσαγορευόμενος Ἰσραήλ, Ἑλληνιστὶ δὲ ὀρῶν θεόν, οὐχ οἷός ἐστιν ὁ θεός — τοῦτο γὰρ ἀμήχανον, ὡς ἔφην — ἀλλ' ὅτι ἔστιν, “if there have been men able to apprehend God through Himself without reason helping to lead them towards the vision [of God], they must be reckoned among the pious and genuine worshippers and friends of God. Among them is he who in Hebrew (lit. in Chaldaean) is called Israel but in Greek the “God-seer”, who sees *not what His real nature is* — *that, as I said, is impossible* — *but that He exists.*” (Adapted from Colson’s translation). What is spoken of here is not knowledge of God’s essence — that is said to be unattainable — but simply the much more modest aspiration to knowledge of God’s existence. This stands foursquare in the tradition of the biblical prophets; it is far removed from the hybriatic pretensions of the gnostics. Pearson is right to conclude that Philo is not dependent upon, or influenced by, Gnosticism. He may well be right too in discerning in the earliest gnostic writings a dependence on Jewish sources. Pearson sees the Jewish element in Gnosticism as being so prominent “as to suggest that Gnosticism originated within Judaism as a revolutionary protest movement against traditional Jewish religion”. Hence, the anti-Jewish thrust in Gnosticism is explained as being due to its Jewish origin. The same might, of course, be said about Christianity. What needs explanation is not the frequently encountered hostility of heretical sects that hate the mother church with a hatred surpassing by far that of real outsiders. Rather than anti-Jewish bias it is un-Jewish (and un-Christian) dualism that needs explanation. Here it is not the possible Jewish (or Christian) origin of some gnostic ideas that will come to our aid, but rather the influence of other oriental sources. Certainly it is idle to postulate early Jewish gnostic trends in Alexandrian Jewry; indeed it seems to me risky and unsound to rely overmuch on hypothetical early gnostics of any kind. What distinguishes hostile gnostic attitudes towards (Jewish and Christian) Old Testament religion is hybriatic blasphemy joined to moral defeatism. This, like the more general cosmic dualism of gnostic thought, is a product of the syn-

cretism of late antiquity, and its sources are more likely to be found in the murky swamps of the intellectual and moral underworld of hellenistic and oriental paganisms than in the moral universe of the inheritors of Hebrew prophecy.

Volume II.21.2 also contains, in a “Nachtrag zu Band II.19”, the following contributions: A. Yarbro Collins, ‘Numerical Symbolism in Jewish and Early Christian Apocalyptic Literature’; Alfredo M. Rabello, ‘L’observance des fêtes juives dans l’Empire romain’; and J. Guttman, ‘Early Synagogue and Jewish Catacomb Art and its Relation to Christian Art’.

These volumes of ANRW are worthy of their predecessors. Together they make up a monument to classical and historical scholarship. The character of the whole series seems to be located somewhere between the completeness (not aimed at) of an encyclopaedia and the variety of a collection of monographs. It is in the nature of such an enterprise that by creating mutually independent monographic pieces it not only closes gaps but creates new gaps and thus encourages further work.

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¹ It would have been enlightening to compare here, for instance, the translations in the Septuagint, the Peshiṭta and the Vulgate of *Lam.* 4.20 with the original Hebrew text: מְשִׁיחַ ה', which = “the anointed of the Lord”, is rendered by מְשִׁיחַ רַמְרִיא in the printed editions of the Peshiṭta, but by *Christus Dominus* in the Vulgate and by *χριστὸς κύριος* in all the manuscripts of the Septuagint. *χριστὸς κυρίου* in the text of Rahlfs is his own emendation, obviously an attempt to return to the correct masoretic text; it is based on insufficient palaeographic arguments and unsupported by any manuscript evidence. The unanimous testimony of the manuscript tradition shows that Christian editors and copyists had successfully changed the text of the LXX in a christological direction at a very early stage in the history of its transmission.

² N.B.: the equation *δῆμος* = *populus* is not invariably a one to one relationship in the *Res Gestae*; *populus* is sometimes left untranslated (e.g. in the *superscriptio*), and *δῆμος* on occasion translates *plebs*, cf. 15.1. There is also a slight inaccuracy in Wigtil’s finding that *bellum* is regularly in the *Res Gestae* rendered by *πόλεμος* [or a derivative] “except for the time it refers to a slave war when the term *ἀπόστατος* is used”. Greek does not have such a word. If the reference is, as I presume, to 25.1, the Greek words *ἀποστατῶν* (from *ἀποστάτης*) *δούλων* there translate the Latin words *servorum qui fugerant*, which are, of course, not to be construed with

the preceding word *bello* and do not in any way translate it. In 27.3 the words *bello servili* are actually rendered by πολέμωι δουλικῶι.

³ It is to be regretted that some very respectable scholars (e.g. S. Holm-Nielsen in 'Religiöse Poesie des Spätjudentums' and H.C.C. Cavallin in 'Leben nach dem Tode im Spätjudentum und im frühen Christentum', both in the first part of this volume) still refer to the formative period in the history of the faith and the people of Israel as "Spätjudentum", using an appellation that is less descriptive of historical and chronological fact than expressive of tendentiously Christian, sometimes even anti-Jewish, prejudice of nineteenth century scholarship, which saw in early Christianity the fulfilment and thus the end of ancient Hebrew religion.

BOOK REVIEWS

BOOK SURVEY

Instrumenta Studii

Among the *instrumenta* to which students and scholars constantly resort, concordances, dictionaries and encyclopaedias take pride of place. After the appearance of the late S.G.F. Brandon's *A Dictionary of Comparative Religion* (1970) there was a lull in the production of handy one-volume dictionaries in English. Perhaps the immediate conditioned reflex was that the Brandon *Dictionary* rendered further publications of this kind superfluous. But both publishers and the market quickly recovered from the shock. (It would, by the way, be an interesting exercise to write a "History of Comparative Religion" exclusively on the basis of an examination of successive dictionaries and encyclopaedias). The *Abingdon Dictionary*,¹ though of comparable size, is conceived along very different lines: major entries on the major religions, a KEY for the smaller entries relating to each religion, maps, charts, many helpful illustrations and photographs, and even a few colour-plates. The Dictionary is determined to be up-to-date; so don't go to it for Sumerian and Babylonian religions but for the history of living religions to the extent that this history is relevant to their present life, as well as to new developments such as "new religions" (viz. cults) and the like. Up-to-dateness occasionally also leads to foolish articles (e.g. "Feminine Dimensions of the Sacred", 6 coll.) and to some odd results. Thus Nestorianism has 9 lines, but no mention of the famous Nestorian stela in Xian. *Nembutsu* has a whole column to which should be added 2 coll. PURE LAND plus several other articles, whilst TEMPLE, PROPHECY (except for one line: "Prophet in Islam, see NABI") or MONOTHEISM are conspicuously absent. But fortunately the Shinto deity Tenchi-kane-no-kami has a long entry. The art. CONVERSION is almost purely Christian, and so is the bibliography at its end which, however, omits Nock. There is no art. on MARTYRDOM, only separate entries on Christian, Muslim and Jewish martyrs (the latter very inadequate). At times irritatingly inadequate, at times extremely helpful, it is nevertheless a dictionary to be kept at one's desk for reference.

The *Penguin Dictionary*² is smaller and handier—almost a pocketbook. No photos or plates, but plenty of maps and charts, and excellent condensed texts: major (and very readable) entries for the major religions,

and good, concise and informative short artt. covering most subjects and concepts. What the Abingdon does by means of a KEY at the beginning, the Penguin does by means of a General Index at the end. The method was chosen by the editor in order to avoid as much as possible the western slant inherent in a western-language dictionary. The word "God" already pre-empts the issue. So better have an art. *Akal Purakh* for the Sikhs. But which ordinary dictionary-user would look up *Akal Purakh*? The editor's solution was: instead of a sub-section GOD (Sikh), please look up the Index under GOD (Sikh) and you'll be sent to *Akal Purakh*. Prof. Hin-nells is to be congratulated on a good job well done.

Several French dictionaries have appeared but have not reached NUMEN. The German *Lexicon der Religionen*³ is a thoroughly revised, re-vamped, and re-written edition of the 1956 *Religionswissenschaftliches Wörterbuch* edited by Franz König (at that time not yet Cardinal of Vienna). The new ed. is the work of Prof. H. Waldenfels S.J. of Bonn University, but testifies to its "apostolic succession" by appearing under the double name König-Waldenfels. Like its predecessor, it does not deny its theological inspiration and direction, but it is a praiseworthy achievement which will be found a valuable resource also by non-theological students of religion.

A completely different type of dictionary has been conceived by the editors of the *Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe*.⁴ It is planned for 4 volumes, of which so far vol. 1 has reached NUMEN. No doubt vols. 2-4 will continue where, alphabetically (*Aberglaube* to *Antisemitismus*, pp. 367ff.), vol. 1 leaves off. The major part of vol. 1 (pp. 1-386) is theoretical and systematic: what are *religionswissenschaftliche Grundbegriffe* and what are the objects and the scientific as well as cultural context of the undertaking called Religionswissenschaft? This introduction is followed by a discussion of culture/religion and a theoretical survey of the relevant disciplines (sociology, psychology, geography, esthetics, anthropology etc. of religion), including a survey of the philosophical approaches. The real innovation of the undertaking is its emphasis on the theoretical (both historical and critical) examination of the "basic concepts" underlying our vocabulary and its use within the context of the relevant social and historical sciences. E.g., the art. ALLEGORESE/ALLEGORIE begins with an attempt to define the term, proceeds with the history of its use, continues with systematic considerations (theories of "rhetoric" in antiquity, the relation signifier-signified, the role of A. as a symbolic mode in the study of culture etc.), and concludes, merely by way of an example, with an account of (Christian) biblical exegesis. But *caveat emptor*: the Dictionary makes high demands on its users (and the editors are to be congratulated

for this) and addresses itself to a readership capable of a high degree of theoretical abstraction.

The major event in recent years was the publication of the massive *Encyclopaedia of Religion*.⁵ To do justice to such a mammoth undertaken a special issue of *NUMEN* would be necessary. The *Encyclopaedia* appears under the name of Mircea Eliade, who still wrote the Preface but did not live to see its publication. However it is not so much the artt. which Eliade contributed but much of the general character of the work that testifies, for better and for worse, to his influence. On the other hand the collaborators were drawn from such a world wide pool of scholarship (in terms of the variety of disciplines and academic traditions) tha the total *opus* can hardly be labelled a product of the "Chicago School", although the prominence of certain Eliadean themes is obvious, as regards both the underlying ideology (e.g., the notion of the sacred as a distinct dimension) and the type of new entries (e.g., from the area of occultism and alchemy), as well as the greater emphasis on doctrine and philosophy rather than social and political sciences (occasional lip-service notwithstanding). This tendency also impinges on the type of hermeneutical reflection (or lack of it) underlying the accounts of religion, *Religionswissenschaft*, and the processes of social and political construction of religious realities. Some articles are excellent and will remain standard summaries of their subject for a long time to come. Others (including some biographical ones) are very inadequate. E.g., much space is devoted to the philosopher Chr. Wolff and his expulsion from the University of Halle and from Prussia; but that this *scandale célèbre* was due, in great part, to Wolff's high appreciation of Chinese civilisation (here too he was the heir of Leibniz) and to his oration, as Vice-Rector, on *De Sinarum Philosophia Practica*, is overlooked. But minor omissions, mistakes and inaccuracies are inevitable in a major collective *opus* of this kind. There is little likelihood of a similar mammoth project being undertaken in the foreseeable future, and hence the ER will remain the standard work of reference for a long time to come, not least because the bibliographies at the end of each article (whilst also mentioning publications that had better been forgotten) bring the reader up-to-date regarding the present state of the art. But when all is said and done, many a happy possessor of the new ER will hesitate to clear from his shelves our good old Hastings (H.E.R.E., which the ER was clearly designed to supplant), the scholarship of which may be antiquated and blighted by the partly Christian, partly positivist prejudices of its period and its irritating "occidentocentrism", yet whose style and erudition still attract us, especially since the prejudices are harmless because so obvious (at least to us), whereas the prejudices inherent in

modern works are more dangerous because well-camouflaged and/or unconscious. This reviewer unashamedly admits that for the same reason he uses the 3rd ed. of the *R.G.G.* and goes to the 4th only to update his bibliography. But all carping and cavilling (a reviewer's privilege!) cannot alter the fact that the new ER is a major achievement and has established itself, immediately on its publication, as a useful, instructive, often illuminating and, in fact, indispensable work of reference.

If there is a Dictionary dealing with a narrow and specific subject viz. text that needs no recommendation, it is Bauer on the N.T. The Dictionary has been reviewed and praised since its first appearance (2nd ed. already 1928; the 5th ed. 1958 was reprinted 1963). Each ed., even the 1963 reprint, was corrected, and/or augmented, and/or revised and improved. The possibility of a thoroughly revised ed. presented itself after Bauer's death, but several hurdles had to be taken first. If you produce a dictionary of a specific text, the first question is, naturally enough, which (edition viz. recension of the) text? In 1979 the 26th ed. (with thoroughly revised critical apparatus) of Nestlé's (now Nestlé-Aland) *Novum Testamentum Graecum* appeared, and the Dictionary had a clear textual reference. Barbara Aland is largely responsible for important, almost revolutionary innovations in method. The attentive user will notice the different perspectives in theological and literary history by paying attention to small but significant details. E.g., the substitution of *frühchristlich* for the earlier *übrige urchristliche* reflects a whole chapter in the history of modern scholarship. Far more ancient sources, authors and texts (N.T. variants, Apocrypha, Apostolic Fathers, literature of antiquity and the intertestamentary period) are quoted than ever before, and 250 new articles have been added. To make this miracle of erudition even more miraculous, all this was achieved without increasing the bulk of the book. The miracle was made possible by new typographical methods which (like most miracles) the present reviewer does not pretend to understand. Here, for once, is a Dictionary that completely supersedes its predecessors.⁶

Dr. Ruth Reyna, an American convert to "Oriental Spirituality", has produced a curious Dictionary.⁷ Volume (= Part) 1 "India and the Middle East" (pt. 1 India, pt. 2 the Middle East, which means Islam and Judaism), pp. 1-274, contains 2250 entries, whereas vol. (= Part) 2, divided into China (pp. 277-374) and Japan (pp. 377-419), contains 1500 entries. In the nature of things few entries can be longer than 3-6 lines. The author's definition of philosophy seems rather wide and all-embracing, for otherwise the bull Nandi would not have a separate entry (with picture). Many entries and definitions are rather odd (to put it

mildly). The Sadduces (Hebr. *Tsedugim*) appear as Zadokim (Zadokites?), to give but one example of erratic spelling. One single page in the Japanese section gives us two (inadequate) lines on the god Hachiman, and 3 viz. 4 lines on Hideyoshi and the second Tokugawa Shogun (Hidetada) respectively—apparently both part of the history of Oriental Philosophy. The book is dedicated to Sri Ganesha. Only future research will tell who derived benefit from this strange Dictionary.

Buddhism

No review but an announcement: vol. 1, the one volume of H. Bechert's authoritative 3-volume standard work, 1966ff., to be completely out of print, has now been reprinted⁸—alas not revised and updated; but re-writing such a masterwork is almost impossible. But at least the author lists, in his new Preface (pp. iii-iv), his relevant publications since 1966. Recent events in Sri Lanka and other parts of the "Buddhist World" add renewed interest to the author's magisterial presentation. The reprint is even easier to handle than its predecessor because less bulky—probably because of thinner paper—in spite of the addition of 27 most valuable, indeed vital, pages: an Index.

In 1959, the year of the 2500 Buddha Jayanti, a major and in its way unique publication appeared in Saigon as a quintuple number of *France-Asie* vol. 16 (number 153-157). This soft-cover mammoth publication (over 60 chapters spreading over 1025 pages), entitled *Présence du Bouddhisme* and edited by the editor of *France-Asie*, René de Berval, was the first major survey of Buddhism in its totality (doctrine, history, texts, diffusion, area-by-area accounts). The galaxy of authors (including Filliozat, Mus, Tucci, Lamotte, Lévy, Bareau, Nyanatiloka, Rahula, Miss Horner, Dutt) was dazzling. Inevitably not all contributions were of equal quality, and even some good ones are by now outdated whilst many others still hold their own. After the Vietnam débacle the late de Berval moved to Japan, and those who had the privilege of his friendship kept wondering these last years how the ailing septuagenarian, whose heart seemed any moment at the point of ceasing to beat, nevertheless continued to live. It was as if René de Berval had decided to cling to life until he had seen the new, revised ed.⁹ of his out-of-print *Summa Buddhica* through press. The new ed., beautifully produced (hardcover and on excellent paper) by Gallimard, has 33 chapters only instead of the original 60 plus. Much has been weeded out, a few new chapters added, and the prefatory part re-structured: Tucci and Mus became chapters in the book, and the preface by Filliozat is now preceded by a new *Avant-propos* by Paul Lévy. Progress

in Buddhist studies is evidenced by the growth of the bibliography from 900 to 1400 items. The book is recommended as a present to one's friends and above all – to oneself. René de Berval, who passed away on 28 December, 1987, erected his own monument practically on his deathbed.

When two leading scholars and acknowledged authorities jointly produce a book, the result must be either a dismal failure or a dazzling success. *Buddhism Transformed*¹⁰ is the latter, and one could do worse than reading it straight as a sequel to Bechert's vol. 1. All students of Buddhism, and not only anthropologists, want to know what is happening to Buddhism today when Buddhist societies are in transition, and when traditional complexities ("Precept and Practice", to use the title of one of the co-authors' earlier books; monkhood and politics; social transformations; the gradual demise of the traditional village and the growth of cities; the crystallisation of new social classes) become even more complex and on the other hand the traditional answers become increasingly inadequate and questionable. All these problems cry out for attention and research, even without the added complications of the ethnic strife that is rending Sri Lanka apart (and from which Gombrich and Obeyesekere try to steer clear as much as scholarly responsibility permits). Buddhist-Hindu syncretism has always been a major feature of Ceylonese Buddhism (cf. NUMEN xxix, 1982: 273, and xxxiii, 1986: 269-74 on Obeyesekere's work on the cults of Kataragama and of the goddess Pattini). There are the many distinctive "spirit religions"; the Kataragama-cult which increasingly develops political functions by being self-consciously buddhicised; the creation of new "cult groups" which take the place of declining or already lost types of community; the various developments exhibited by the heritage of the Anagarika Dharmapala (whom the authors, in a splendid *jeu de mots*, describe as one of the founders of "Protestant Buddhism") e.g. the *Sarvodaya* in the socio-economic sphere; the evolution (and politisation) of the newly invented, almost Bhakti-type, *Bodhi-puja*. Yet all this renewed Hinduisation of religion does not, and, as the authors probably correctly suggest, will not, detract from Sinhalese identification with Theravada Buddhism and its self-definition on the basis of traditional orthodoxy. A deeply satisfying and richly rewarding book.

The praises of the International Inst. of Buddhist Studies in Tokyo have already been sung in NUMEN xxxiii (1986): 260-1. Since then the Institute has not rested on its laurels. Fascicles and books in all the series (*Studia Philologica Buddhica* Monograph Series as well as Occasional Papers Series; *Bibliographia Philologica Buddhica* Series Maior as well as Series Minor; *Bibliographia Indica et Buddhica* pamphlets) have kept appearing. Some

items are published not by the Institute but independently (for reasons of scholarly ethics) by its sponsoring body, the Reiyukai. Most of the Institute publications are not reviewed in NUMEN since they are addressed not to general historians of religion but to an élitist band of Sanskrit and Tibetan philologists. Once exception must, however, be made.¹¹ The Yogacara concept of Alayavijnana (the so-called “store-consciousness”, identified sometimes as the 7th, sometimes as the 8th consciousness) compounds all manner of difficult, obscure and complex problems, especially if we want to know not only the precise meaning(s) of the term (at various times and for various thinkers), but also its origins i.e., the difficulties—which soon became pressures—inherent in the notion of *anatta* as well as in various Abhidhamma doctrines that motivated the development of a concept that could not but generate questions, discussion and dissension. Perhaps the Pudgalavadins were the unconscious ancestors of the *Problematik* that led to this doctrine. The subject is highly technical—perhaps even too technical for the ordinary, run-of-the-mill Buddhologist—and it is the discipline’s good karma that has led Prof. Schmithausen to devote a full-length study to it. The only disingenuous part of the book is p. vii of the Preface in which that great master—*nec pluribus impar*—bemoans the inadequacies and defects of his book. Readers should skip that page and start with p. viii.

Mention of the Institute as well as parallel Reiyukai publications presents an occasion to make brief reference to books not normally mentioned in these pages. A sumptuous 2 vol. facsimile ed. of one of the oldest Japanese (Ashikaga era?) Lotus mss. on one end of the spectrum, and a 4 vol. collection of materials relating to the history of the Reiyukai on the other. Of special interest—because a scholarly work produced not by a professional academic but the leader of a “new sect”—is Dr. Tsugunari KUBO’s “The Fundamental Philosophy of the Lotus Sutra with Respect to the Practices of the Bodhisattva”.¹² Although as a rule only books written in western languages are mentioned in NUMEN, an exception is made in the case of this instructive study because (would all Japanese publications followed this example!) it has an English summary with constant references to the Japanese main text. (Dr. Kubo’s pamphlet-size survey of the new Japanese “Lay-Buddhism” has already been mentioned in NUMEN xxxiv (1987: 119).

More Buddhist studies will be mentioned in the sections on China and Japan. To conclude this section we shall turn to the future i.e., to Maitreya. (The word “future”, although extremely problematic, has been deliberately chosen because it is at least slightly less problematic than “millenarian”, “messianic”, or “eschatological”). Incidentally, it is no

big jump from the Reiyukai to Maitreya, since Miroku (the Japanese form of the name) plays an important role in that religion as, in fact, in many other Japanese “new religions”. NUMEN xxxvi (1989: 279-80) mentioned “Turkish” Buddhism viz. Turkish-Uighur Buddhist texts. One of the most interesting is no doubt the *Maitrisimit*. No Sanskrit, Tibetan or Chinese versions are known. The extant Turkish text (thus the consensus of specialists) is a translation from Tokharic—which leads us from Silk Road Buddhism back to Iran and to possible Iranian and Manichean influences. There are many and extremely intriguing problems here, of much greater interest to the historian of religion than the dubious Mithra-Maitreya association. Parts of the text were known since the German Turfan expeditions brought their mss. to Berlin. Specialists of the calibre of Annemarie von Gabain have devoted much efforts to these texts, but the ms. found in 1959 (the Hami version) fills many lacunae and necessitates a re-assessment of the material. The publication¹³ of the first 5 chapters of the Hami version, though meant in the first place for Turco-Uighur experts, should, in due course, also contribute to the study of Silk Road Buddhism in general and of the future Buddha Maitreya in particular.

Maitreya is beyond doubt one of the most bewildering figures in the Buddhist pantheon. He is more “canonical” than most other Buddhas and Bodhisattvas (a “Hinayanist carryover” it has been said), and exhibits a confusing variety of faces, features and functions in different periods and different places. He fascinates Buddhologists and non-Buddhologists alike. The latter may be less concerned with the problem of Mahasanghika *versus* Sarvastivadin elements in his complex character but all the more with the many points at which he touches general history-of-religions problems: historical, especially Iranian, influences; messianic-millenarian-eschatological elements (see the literature from A-Z i.e., from Abegg 1910 to Zurcher’s paper of 1982); folk- as well as elite-religion (including devotionism and popular merit-making); peasant rebellions and social ferment (Overmyer’s essay is an excellent supplement to his *Folk Buddhist Religion*); politics (the relation of Maitreya and Cakravartin concepts). No less fascinating is the study of “Comparative Maitreyism”: North India, Khotan and Central Asia; China, Korea and Japan; Southeast Asia. Understandably enough the Princeton Maitreya Conference (May 1983) aroused wide interest and great expectations (not all of which were fulfilled, in spite of the galaxy of participants: Kitagawa, Jan Nattier, Alan Sponberg, Lewis Lancaster, Overmyer, Helen Hardacre and others no less eminent). For some mysterious reason the publication of the Conference Volume¹⁴ was inordinately delayed. But now, at long last, we have the book which is so multi-disciplinary and

cross-cultural, yet also so expertly specialised, that every chapter invites further discussion rather than review. There is a limit to what one is allowed to expect from a conference volume. At least one reader regretted that Southeast Asia was restricted to Vietnam, although the Burmese and Thai material is even more interesting since it exhibits a variety of “interfaces” (as the modern neo-barbarian jargon has it) with the Maitreya-Cakravartin-Millennium complexes. (Cf. e.g. Yoneo ISHĪ, “A Note on Buddhistic Millenarian Revolts in Northeastern Siam” in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* vi, 1975: 121-6, and especially the—incomplete and inadequate, but nevertheless usefull—bibliography *ibid.* p. 123 n. 12, not one item of which appears in the volume under review). Christine Guth’s beautiful chapter on 7th cent. Japanese iconography leaves the reader both grateful and frustrated. The discussion of Maitreya/Shotoku takes off from the Chugu-ji statue (an ideal jumping-board), but one would have liked to learn much more, especially as regards Maitreya as a member of the different Buddha-triads found all over.

It may, perhaps, be permitted to conclude this section by presenting another, culturally significant, example of Buddhist “art”. The wall-frescoes in Thai temples depicting Buddhist *Heilsgeschichte* usually have as their last pictures the horrors, violence and destruction marking our final *vipralopa* (jap. *mappo*) age, followed by a picture of the descent of Maitreya. The final picture in the series shows paradise on earth, with happy human families congregating under the “wishing trees”. But these happy human beings, at least in some instances, wear western dress! Perhaps the conference should have had a paper on “Maitreya and the Future as westernising modernity”.

China and Further East

Needless to say that the study of Chinese religion is not limited to Folk-religion, Taoism and Buddhism. Confucianism—whether a “state-cult”, a “religion”, a “spirituality” or whatnot—is recovering lost ground. Many American names (including those of Chinese now living and teaching in America) such as e.g., TU Wei-ming, David Nivison, Arthur Wright, but especially Th. de Bary (in his capacity of teacher, organiser, initiator and author: cf. his last four books of 1981, 1983, 1988 and 1989) are associated with this development. He and a number of other “Confucianists” met at a colloquium held in Jerusalem (March 1983) in memory of the Russian-Israeli scholar Vitaly Rubin whose untimely death in a motor accident bereft the Hebrew University and Confucian scholarship of one of its best minds. The Colloquium volume¹⁵ contains, in addition



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to a selection of the papers presented, also a very sensitive essay by the editor and conference organiser, Prof. Irene Eber, on Rubin the scholar and the man, as well as a posthumous (unfinished) paper by Rubin. Pt. 1 of the volume deals with the unfolding of early Confucianism (TU Weiming, the Han expert HSU Cho-Yua, and the Tel Aviv scholar Yoav Ariel)—the authors must surely have had in mind a deliberate contrast to the de Bary conference and volume on “The Unfolding of [17th c.] Neo-Confucianism”. There is a fine and sensitive essay by de Bary and a paper on “Confucian Spirituality” by Julia Ching whose involvement in Confucian-Christian dialogue (see *NUMEN* xxvii, 1980: 176-8) makes her the obvious person to address this dimension of Confucianism. And although this section does not deal with interreligious dialogues, it should be mentioned in passing that Prof. Ching’s book reviewed in *NUMEN* xxvii, 1980: 176-8 has now been published (with the bibliography updated) also in German.¹⁶

The same aforementioned review in *NUMEN* (pp. 174-6) also devoted some space to Leibniz and his understanding of China (= Confucianism). From Leibniz it is but a small step to his disciple and heir Christian Wolff and to the latter’s *Oratio de Sinarum Philosophia Practica*—at the time an academic bombshell (see also above, p. xx). This important text (important not so much for sinology as for European *Geistesgeschichte*—in fact, this paragraph should have the caption “China and further west”) has now been competently and attractively edited, with German translation and several useful additions, by M. Albrecht.¹⁷ No less valuable than the edition-plus-translation of the text is the editor’s Introduction which, in about 100 pp., surveys the beginnings of “China-consciousness” in Europe, the Jesuit mission and the Rites Controversy, Leibniz, Wolff and much more. Albrecht carefully examines the sources of Wolff’s (very limited) knowledge of China (Wolff, unlike Leibniz, had no direct contacts with China-missionaries), and makes the interesting point that the intellectual discovery of China had a greater influence on Europe than the discovery of America a century earlier. Of course, the influence of the *Oratio* on German philosophy was relatively negligible, but its impact on Voltaire was tremendous, and via Voltaire (and his article on China in his *Dictionnaire*) Wolff’s views percolated into the European Enlightenment.

Among the many *obiter dicta* that should not be taken too literally is also the saying that a real comparison is possible only between two things. This would make “comparative religion” very different from morphology, typology, phenomenology etc. of religions. A study that lives up to this restrictive dictum is Sister Sung-Hae KIM’s comparison of the images of the ideal man in the confucian and Biblical worlds respectively.¹⁸ Of

course each of these entities is complex enough in itself, as Prof. Kim amply demonstrates. The Biblical world has, next to the paramount ideal of the “righteous” also its type of sages (cf. the biblical “Wisdom Literature”). Moreover the O.T. concepts are decisively shaped by the notion of the “Holy People” within which the perfect man functions. Confucian tradition has its “Noble Man”, its “Sage” and much more. This fine study (originally a Harvard dissertation) gives insights into O.T. as well as Chinese “anthropology”. One reader at least, much regretted that Prof. Kim restricted her comparative analysis to the O.T. *tsaddiq* and did not deal with a far more fascinating and relevant comparison: the rabbinic sage. After all, pharisaic-rabbinic-talmudic Judaism is a culture in which the Torah-“sage” is not only the ideal man, but also the bearer—in theory *and* practice—of religious/social norms and social authority. But Prof. Kim is a conscientious scholar: since her specialised expertise (outside Chinese studies) is the Hebrew O.T. and not talmudic literature, she refused to go beyond her field of competence.

On the popular level Zen = Japan and/or Japan = Zen (and the late D.T. Suzuki may have to answer for much on the last day of judgment). In the world of scholarship Chinese Ch’an receives increasing attention, and with the passage of time Korea too will receive its full due. As regards Chinese Ch’an two of the main themes have been Northern School *v.* Southern School and Subitism *v.* Gradualism. (By saying “two themes” we have already indicated our rejection of the simplistic homologisation of the two pairs). The volume *Sudden and Gradual*¹⁹ ed. by P.N. Gregory (to whom we also owe a fine study of *Traditions of Meditation in Chinese Buddhism*) is a landmark: 10 illuminating chapters (whether sudden or gradual depends on the reader’s ability) of which two are translations of earlier French classics by Demiéville and R.A. Stein respectively. That venerable classics too may need a second hard look is well illustrated by Louis O. Gomez’s discussion of Demiéville. An Afterword is provided by an author whose name is not normally associated with Ch’an studies: TU Wei-ming. The burden of the volume is its holistic approach to the Chinese (viz. sinitic) “universe of discourse”. In other words, we are meant to deal both with Chinese intellectual traditions and their inherent polarities, and with the Buddhist impact on these traditions. But this also means that the subitist-gradualist polarity has to be analysed in Chinese terms and in a “sinitic” context, and not merely in terms of Indian Buddhism. Via the *p’an chiao* doctrinal classifications, the theme also links up with *upaya* doctrines. Those who have both Soto and Rinzai experience will rejoice in the sane treatment of the polarity which is the book’s theme in these two traditions, and with the short shrift that is made of the simplistic identification

of the *koan*-method with subitism and *shikantaza* with gradualism. After all, the real point of *shikantaza* is (especially in view of the basic *hongaku* doctrine) the almost obsessive Soto fear of turning *zazen* into the means (sitting) to an end (enlightenment)—a dualism which effectively precludes any enlightenment. The book is another feather in the cap of the Kuroda Institute.

The title of B. Faure's magnificent *La Volonté d'Orthodoxie*²⁰—originally a Paris dissertation—may seem misleading to those whose conditioned reflexes associate “orthodoxy” with Christianity or other western religions. Of course, much has been written, and much still remains to be written, on the subject of orthodoxy/heterodoxy in general (cf. e.f., NUMEN xxxvi, 1989: 275-76) and in the Chinese context, especially Confucianism and Buddhism, in particular. Those who are familiar with the Sino-Buddhist context will guess what Prof. Faure is after, and that he wants not merely to study but also to question. The book deals, as regards chronology, mainly with the T'ang period; as regards forms of Buddhism, with the accession of Ch'an to the status of orthodoxy (which in practical terms means, among other things, the importance attached to the proper “apostolic succession” of patriarchs); and as regards internal Ch'an developments, with the emergence of the two schools, the nature of the North/South dichotomy (or rivalry?), and especially the Northern School as such. Faure's discussion reinforces the statement made in the previous paragraph to the effect that the Northern/Southern division is not identical with the Subitism/Gradualism dichotomy. For his rewriting of a significant chapter of buddhist, especially Northern School, history, the author makes intelligent and felicitous use of Tun-Huang texts which, for some reason, other historians have neglected. One of the most important questions concerns the ultimate eclipse of the Northern School, and the process by which Southern School Ch'an imposed itself on subsequent history. The importance of the book is in its main text; its full richness of erudition and critical insight is revealed in the abundant and dense notes. The most pertinent words of praise for Prof. Faure would be to say that his book does not make you think: it makes you re-think!

Prof. Buswell has already contributed significantly to Korean Ch'an (Son) studies (see NUMEN xxxiii, 1986: 253). Hard on the heels of his great Chinul book there followed a smaller scale study of the same “patriarch” by a Korean scholar.²¹ Buswell's most recent study of early Ch'an in China and Korea by way of a close study of the *Vajrasamadhi-sutra*²² is a stunning and convincing performance, the main thrust of which can only briefly and superficially be summarised here. Buswell looks at his material not from a Chinese plus Korean plus Japanese point of view, but in an

integral East Asian perspective. It is precisely in this wider framework that the Korean material gains its full significance. The close study of the Vajrasamadhi has two faces, as it were. There is its importance for a new look at the literature, trends, doctrines and practice, polemics as well as mutual syncretistic influences and “reconciliation” of conflicting doctrines, of the various Buddhist schools in general and emerging Ch’an in particular. The reader, as he goes along, will find important contributions to a large variety of subjects: Northern School, gradualism/subitism, *tathagatagarba* as theory and practice, the concept of *alayavijnana* and much more. Secondly, there is the author’s very specific theory concerning the sutra itself, which has been held, for a long time, to be a translation from the Sanskrit. More recently it came to be regarded as a Chinese “apocryphon”. (The Hobogirin *Répertoire* of the TSD, 2nd ed. 1978, p. 37 no. 273 still has a question-mark *Apocryphe?*). Buswell agrees that the sutra is apocryphal, but then springs his surprise: not Chinese but composed towards the end of the 17th cent. in Korea (Silla). Future scholarly consensus will probably agree.

A funny thing happened on the way to Chinese Buddhology, and a word should be said about it in passing—if only to illustrate once more the influence, also in matters of terminology, of certain academic traditions. As regards textual criticism, this tradition was shaped in the most highly developed area (next to classical studies) of historico-philological scholarship: biblical studies. Since ancient times a body of literature has existed, at the margins of the biblical scriptures as it were, which, however, the authorities at the time (rabbinic and ecclesiastic) did not—for whatever reasons—admit into the canon. In Hebrew these non-canonical books, which were not to be read at all viz. “excluded from circulation”, were called *sefarim hitsonim* (“outside” viz. “excluded” books) or *sefarim genuzim* (hidden books i.e., books to be hidden away; they had to be stacked away in some cellar or loft and could not be burned or otherwise destroyed because, although uncanonical or even heretical, the mss. contained the holy name of God). The Greek word for “hidden away” is *apocrypha* (plural). Undoubtedly many writings were consigned to hidden i.e., apocryphal existence because they were deemed to be pseudo-epigraphs i.e., their date and authorship were recognised not to be those alleged in the text. Of course many pseudepigrapha went unrecognised and became canonical. Did King Solomon really write the Old Testament *Song of Songs*? Were all N.T. Epistles ascribed to St. Paul written by Paul? But the close association “Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha” gradually led to a merging of the concepts, with the result that the latter term all but disappeared and the former was used also in the latter sense. I earlier des-

cribed this situation as “funny” because students of Chinese Buddhism call apocryphal any text that is not a translation of a (lost or extant) Sanskrit original. In Buddhist studies the term “hidden away” viz. “non-canonical” (which is what apocryphal means) thus came to signify its exact opposite: pseudepigrapha which are anything but hidden, but on the contrary highly canonical, of the widest possible dissemination, and exerting profound historical influence. According to this usage, the Lotus Sutra is not apocryphal: there is a Sanskrit original; but did the historical Buddha preach it or is it a pseudepigraph? Or is the latter fact so obvious that there is no need to describe it by a special term?

In his excellent study (which does not mean that it lacks dubious assertions and debatable points) of the Chinese Ghost-Festival,²³ Prof. Teiser gives us the first comprehensive analysis of one of the most important festivals. Though it might appear at first glance to be a folk-religion affair, the fact that this summer-festival (presentation of offerings to Buddhist monks for the welfare of the souls of ancestors) was also important for the upper classes, turns Teiser’s book into a further contribution to the seemingly unending discussion of folk *versus* élite religion in China. It is in the nature of things (i.e., the medieval form of the festival; the part played in it by Buddhist monks; the mythological notions, doctrines and rituals, especially those relating to afterlife, hells and salvation from the latter) that the emphasis should be on the Buddhist side, including Buddhist texts, many of which are translated and examined for the first time. All this is right and proper as far as it goes, but it may well play down the pre-Buddhist (Taoist?) origins. Although the author points to indigenous antecedents and continuities, he should have put more emphasis than he did on the Buddhist transformation of the festival (as part of the Buddhist transformation of lots of other things, but especially of ideas concerning the soul, afterlife and the ancestors). The present reviewer derived special pleasure and illumination from the chapter “Mu-lien as a Shaman” though he tends to disagree with the author’s views on the relationship Taoism-Shamanism (in spite of the invocation of Schipper). Perhaps the opposite is nearer the truth: shamanism is precisely one of those aspects of folkreligion which institutionalised Taoism most strenuously opposed! But there can be no doubt that this book is one of the most interesting and insightful contributions to the study of Chinese religion.

Exhibition Catalogues, especially of the album type, are among the best and most accessible sources for acquaintance with religious iconography. NUMEN xxxiv, 1987: 269-70, devoted several paragraphs to such album-catalogues, and NUMEN xxxvi, 1989: 278-79 praised the Berlin Museum for its “Silk Road” volume on Buddhist cave art from Turfan. The Berlin

Museum, this time its ethnological division, East Asia Section, is again due for special praise. Entitled *Wege der Götter und Menschen*,²⁴ this illustrated catalogue contains over 15 short introductory essays by various authors, and plenty of maps, photographs, reproductions of woodblock prints, and superb colour plates. A most instructive introduction to Chinese religion for the layman, the volume is of inestimable value also to more expert readers, not only because of the illustrations and plates but also because of the frustrating texts. Frustrating because a museum catalogue, intended by definition for the interested general reader viz. museum-visitor, can give only short introductions to its various subjects (the “three religions”; the 16 Lohans; Guanyin devotion; cult of graves, of the dead and of the ancestors; ideas concerning the hereafter; shamanism) in a manner that suggests or implies theses and theories about which the historian of religion would dearly love more detailed arguments, explanations and references. Two random examples must suffice here. C. Müller’s rejection of de Groot’s (relatively unimportant) notion of “universism”, but his forceful affirmation of de Groot’s essential and correct insight concerning the underlying unity of all Chinese religion, cries out for a more precise definition of the nature of this unity. The tantalisingly brief paragraph on the sexual transformation of Guanyin (p. 38) suggests a) that there were two parallel but independent transformations, one in Tibet and another in China (the last important discussion of this subject is R.A. Stein’s in *Cahiers* no. 2, 1986, where this implausible possibility is not mentioned), and b) that the problem of such transformation does not concern Guanyin alone: “since the 12th century at the latest, Bodhisattvas are always [*sic*] represented as goddesses and regarded as female beings”. (Cf. also the more moderate formulation by the writer of these lines in *NUMEN* xxix, 1982: 130). But a catalogue-album is not a collection of Ph.D. dissertations, and we should be grateful to C. Müller, the chief editor, and to his associates and collaborators, for what they have given us.

Interest in esoteric Buddhism, from Tibetan trantrism to Japanese *mikkyo*, is growing. What is, and what is not, a healthy growth, is not our present concern. This interest results in popular *basse vulgarisation* as well as in first-class scholarly publications. The title *Shingon*²⁵ already indicates the emphasis on the Japanese version, in spite of the brief outline of the Indian and Chinese antecedents in ch.1. Prof. Yamasaki is one of Japan’s outstanding *mikkyo*-experts, in addition to being a highranking Shingon ecclesiastic. We thus have an unimpeachable scholarly work, though not in the western academic sense, which also makes it a Shingon document and not merely “a study of”. The translators have done a splendid job,

especially as they did not simply translate one specific book but conflated several of T. Yamasaki's writings, so that the volume before us gives the full range of the author's views. Alas, the production of the book falls short of both the author's scholarship and the translators' devoted and competent skills. Obviously the translators were never sent proofs, for otherwise there would never have been that profusion of glaring misprints or the reversed printing of many illustrations (e.g., the mandalas on the front and back cover, the sculptures of Kukai and Dainichi Nyorai p. 63, and, above all, the Aka-Fudo frontispiece which, on top of everything, is printed so dark that its subject is unrecognisable). Richard and Cynthia Peterson deserve our gratitude and applause and have, indeed, already received an accolade even before publication and on the basis of their ms.: Carmen Blacker wrote a Foreword! The Preface by the "Editors" had better be omitted in a second ed., and replaced by a Preface in which the translators explain what the book is and what it is not, their method of translation and adaptation, which writings of Yamasaki they used, and their use of extra sources. Proofreading by the translators would also do away with the irritating misprints. And the publishers should do public penance by printing decent plates—if possible not reversed.

*The Three Jewels*²⁶ is no doctrinal exposition (though it breathes a Tendai atmosphere), let alone sutra, but a valuable document of Heian Buddhism, incidentally of interest to literary studies no less than to Socio-Buddhology. The latter barbarian neologism has been coined to indicate that we are dealing with aristocratic lay-Buddhism. The *sanbōe* was written by a scholar-bureaucrat for the spiritual benefit of Sonshi, an imperial princess, who became a nun at the age of 19 and died at the age of 22. We are thus transposed into the world of the *Genji Monogatari*''', though our author does not hide his hostility to the *monogatari* (including the illustrated *monogatari* i.e., *e-maki*) type of romance literature and frankly declares his intention to provide the imperial nun with an edifying *emaki-monogatari*. Needless to say that such literary activity would also increase the author's store of merits. Enough has been said to suggest why this text is of absorbing interest and why Prof. Kamens's translation and analysis of the *sanbōe* is a valuable contribution to our understanding of Heian Buddhism from a lay perspective or, to be more exact, our understanding of the absorption of Buddhist (Tendai version) values in late 10th cent. court and nobility circles.

And now from Heian to Kamakura. Japanese Pure Land Buddhism attracts increasing attention from converts, scholar converts, and straight scholars. Of the works of scholarship, Dobbins's *Jōdo Shinshū*²⁷ is the most comprehensive and up-to-date. The absence of French and German titles

in the bibliography (which also means e.g., the absence of H. Haas's *Amida unsere Zuflucht*, 1910, or the same author's articles on Honen, 1912, and Shinran, 1916-7) is more than compensated by the 8 pp. of densely printed and up-to-date Japanese bibliography. Whilst not offering any revolutionary new insights, the book considerably deepens, completes, and, with an intelligent and knowledgeable grasp of the historical, social and doctrinal background, competently "organises" and illuminates whatever insights we had. The author brings out very clearly the view of Pure Land history as held by Shinsu believers, but is also careful to correct "our" historiography, insisting that the complexities of sectarian evolution have too often been unduly simplified or even distorted: "each of the new [i.e., Kamakura] shoos followed an extended and sometimes tortuous path of development". Dobbins's account also makes incidental (or not so incidental?) contributions to the problems of orthodoxy/heterodoxy, sectarian schisms, relations with rival schools viz. rival traditions, and the processes of adaptation and institutionalisation; cf. e.g., the development from the original anti-*kami* attitude to the prescriptions in Rennyo's *okite* ("rules of conduct"). Chronologically the account takes us from Honen to Rennyo (end of the 15th cent.). Of special value and interest is the author's discussion of *zōaku muge* and *hōite muzan* (i.e., licence to sin without remorse). Even if this doctrine had remote origins in the Tachikawa sect, it attained its mature *Problematik* in Shin-Buddhism. The Jesuit missionaries who were apalled to find the Protestant *sola fides* heresy in Japan, would have been even more apalled had they paid attention to the presence in Japan of Luther's *pecca fortiter*. It is perhaps the author's determination to stick to his subject that prevented him from at least hinting at the wider implications for the history of religions in general: when and why do some soteriological systems opt for the ascetic (whether inner-worldly or other-worldly) viz. "Puritan" way, whilst others go off in an antinomian direction? On one important point the author seems to skate too lightly over thin ice. No doubt Shinran's rejection of clerical celibacy and monasticism (another famous Luther analogy) is connected with his decisive lay orientation. But can we really say without reservation that Shinran's teachings "were not so much a distortion of Buddhism, as an emphasis on certain Buddhist principles over others"? After all, the Buddha founded no church and certainly no priesthood, but a monastic-ascetic order. Shinran turned his brand of Buddhism into an even more priest-ridden church, for monks no longer *also* acted as priests but ceased to be monks and were turned into priests pure and simple. This is not only a far cry from contemporary "lay Buddhism", but even in terms of his own time Shinran preached neither the

“priesthood of all believers” nor a religion without priests. He married, but insisted on continuing to wear his priestly “cassock”. Dobbins’s account of Jodo Shin is a fine and integrative piece of work, but does not dispense us from further thinking.

Prof. Hajime NAKAMURA is one of Japan’s leading Buddhologists, and his work has exerted wide influence because on more than one occasion he has gone beyond the confines of his philological-historical scholarship and addressed wider issues. Thus his famous analysis of Indian, Tibetan, Chinese and Japanese modes of thought has swept much current nonsense about a monolithic western *versus* a monolithic eastern thinking. The present volume on seeds or first intimations of “modern thought” in Japanese religions²⁸ is interesting because, unlike most of his colleagues, Nakamura does not make a beeline for Heidegger *et similes*, but takes his cues from Max Weber. This is inevitable if you want to talk about modernity, but this evasive and much-debated concept remains even more evasive and unclear in Nakamura’s hands. It is only to be expected that the main emphasis should be on Buddhism, and since the latter is the one “pan-Asian” religion, it is not surprising that the author should nevertheless fall back on the general term “the religions of Asia” and their relation to modernity (ch. 3). One cannot help detecting a subliminal (though certainly unintended) apologetic tendency, also in the treatment of socio-economic questions. The “modernisation of the soul” (to use a term coined by Bellah) is also addressed, but in a manner that leaves the reader wondering whether the author has really come to grips with the problem. The long chapter on “the spirit of service” is a good example. Instances of the presence of this spirit may have been useful, at a time, as answers to the accusations of Christian missionaries that Buddhism (Theravada in particular) was a religion of selfishness. But does the adducing of evidence that pious monks spent days and nights on end reciting sutras to save their country or for the benefit of their fellow-men (not to speak of the Bodhisattva ideal as such) really contribute anything to an understanding of modernity in Asian religions? The editor (H.-J. Klimkeit?) in his short preface unwittingly exposes the weakness of the book by referring to Bellah’s *Tokugawa Religion* as evidence for the presence of values making for modernity. But not only has Bellah’s thesis come under heavy criticism; even at best his argument merely helped to explain why Japan could be more receptive to certain aspects of modernisation whereas other Buddhist countries remained “third world”. But Nakamura’s book is full of interesting details and serious reflection, and hence well worth reading, if only as an example how a leading Japanese Buddhist scholar tries to tackle the problem of “modern thinking”—whatever that may be.

More and more learned periodicals publish theme-focussed issues. Thus the *Cahiers d'Extrême-Orient* (see NUMEN xxxiii, 1986: 262) have already planned in advance numbers devoted to Korean Studies (1990), Zen (1991) and Chinese divination (1992). *The Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*²⁹ has published two double numbers on Tendai Buddhism and on Shugendo and Mountain Religion in Japan respectively. The contents are varied and unequal, and by definition there cannot be a central thesis emerging out of a collection of papers in a journal. But the richness of the contents and the awareness of the multi-faceted variety inherent even in a very specific theme which these special numbers convey, are a blessing beyond the value of the individual articles.

Passing from Buddhism to Shinto, a special number has been put together by our Chicago counterpart, *History of Religions*.³⁰ The difficulties of pinpointing Shinto and of dealing with it have been ably surveyed by Michael Pye in his review-essay in the journal *Religion* xi, 1981. The number under review has a good introductory chapter by J.M. Kitagawa and an article on Heian Shinto by Alan Grapard. An interesting article on the *Gion matsuri* still leaves us in Heian. Of the other three articles, all dealing with Shinto in the Meiji period, Helen Hardacre's on Shinto priesthood in early Meiji is perhaps the most thought-provoking.

Old and hoary commonplace truths nevertheless surprise us whenever we actually encounter them. One of these truths is that important insights often come from the most unexpected quarters and from experts in completely different fields. Few students of Japanese folk religion are aware of the importance of the contributions made by the Swiss architect Nold Egenter, founder and director of "Documentation Centre for Fundamental Studies in Building Theory". During his repeated and prolonged periods of fieldwork in Japan, he was struck by the role played by "artificial" trees erected for certain *matsuri* and burned (like other paraphernalia of the *hi-matsuri*) when the celebrations are over. (A natural tree would never catch fire immediately like a torch (*taimatsu*) and burn down). This led him to a more intensive study of temporary structures built for special, non-domestic purposes and the use made of reeds, rice-straw and bamboo in all sorts of "ritual" building, including the temporary "seats of the gods" (*yorishiro*). The ethnologist Egenter applies the training of the architect Egenter to pursue his researches (carried out with the help of the Mombusho and in conjunction with the Dept. of Architecture of Kyoto University). The field-work was done mainly in villages in the vicinity of Omihachiman near Lake Biwa. Egenter's method is based on an analysis of the form of the structures, the materials used, and the ways they are being used. The first major publication resulting from this

research appeared in connection with an exhibition “Seats of the Gods and Human Dwellings” held by the ETH (the prestigious Federal School of Technology in Zurich) in 1980.³¹ The next volume, following hard on the heels of its predecessor, dealt with a more specific subject and was published in a bi-lingual (German and English) edition.³² This volume too analyses in great detail the structure, form and symbolism of the bamboo/reed structures erected in connection with the *taimatsu* (torch) festival in Ueda village (Shiga Prefecture) and its constituent hamlets. It was preceded by an article in *Asiatische Studien* xvi, 1981: 34-54 “Die heilige Bäume um Goshonai: ein Bauethnologischer Beitrag zum Thema Baumkult”, which already adumbrated, in condensed form, the author’s main theses. There are column or hut-like types of fixed trusses (*okimatsu*); high-column, movable as well as stable trusses (*kasa-taimatsu*). It is when we come to a discussion of the symbolism that the historian of religion may want to demur. Egenter is no doubt right in insisting on the decisive importance of *Sachtradition* i.e., the materials and the techniques of construction. These latter possess a permanence through time which the concomitant “interpretations”, changing throughout history in accordance with cultural and religious developments and influences, do not have. Hence it would be a waste of time to question your village-informants about “meanings”. Just stick to the *res* that you can objectively analyse: material, techniques, form, measurements etc. There is a “genetic” underlying groundstructure (or should we say “underground structure”?) which provides the key to the “relative symbolism”. To study things the other way round would be putting the cart before the horse. This is a methodological *credo* with far-reaching implications, and not everyone will agree with what are for Egenter axiomatic truths e.g., the assumption that through the study of the *Sachtradition* you can penetrate to the original significance, or the assertion that a type of structure found over a larger area is necessarily secondary whereas those found only in one locality must be primary. But Egenter’s presentation and discussion are invaluable, not only because of the wealth of material, the penetrating analyses and his bold hypotheses, but also because he teaches historians of religion to re-think their own matter-of-course axiomas and assumptions.

Oriental Studies

There is a (possibly “apocryphal”, see above p. 122) story about Stanley Arthur Cook, the famous Regius Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge University, who is said to have expressed his disapproval of the eagerness

of the younger generation of scholars to travel to Arab countries, Turkey, India, Southeast Asia, China or Japan, with the adage “no orientalist need go further east than Leiden”. Some, equally library- and ms.-addicted, scholars emended this adage to “further east than Leningrad”. Nowadays such a statement simply seems ridiculous, but in all fairness to our ancestors we must admit that the cradle of the History of Religions is (ignoring for the moment the biblical/Hebrew and classical chairs) in the orientalist departments of the universities. It was there that the study of Asian religions developed, whilst the study of the (then) so-called “primitive religions” entrenched itself in the anthropology departments. There was, of course, also the “input” of missiology as taught in Faculties of Theology. Only since the spectacular increase in the number of chairs and departments of religious studies, many a sinologist or indologist, interested mainly in religion, faces the dilemma what kind of department to join. At any rate, the history of orientalism is part of the history of our discipline, and Dr. Otterspeer has done us a singular service by editing a volume on Oriental Studies in Leiden.³³ The volume and the names in it are awe-inspiring: O.T. and Hebrew studies since Kuenen; Syriac; Dozy, Snoeck Hurgronje, Wensinck and their galaxy of Islamic students; Heesterman’s chapter on the history of Sanskrit and Indian studies and a chapter “Imagine Leiden without Kern”; Tiele; the father of Leiden cultural anthropology, de Josselin de Jong sr.; the role of “empire” (Indonesia) in promoting not only certain branches of orientalism and anthropology (including the study of “primitive religions”; cf. e.g., the work of J. van Baal) but also missionary interests; Blussé on sinology, Frits Vos on Japanology, and Willem van Gulik, the Director of the Ethnological Museum and son of one of Holland’s most brilliant sinologists, on von Siebold and his collection. (By the way, the illustrations in the beautiful volume on von Siebold recently published in Brussels in connection with EUROPALIA 1989 devoted to Japan, all come from the Siebold Collection in the Leiden Museum). Dr. Otterspeer’s volume makes fascinating and absorbing reading.

R.J.Z.W.

¹ K. Crim (Gen. Ed.) and R.A. Bullard, L.D. Shinn (Assoc. Edd.), *Abingdon Dictionary of Living Religions* (Nashville, Abingdon) 1981, xii + 830, ISBN 0-687-00409-8.

² John R. Hinnells (ed.), *The Penguin Dictionary of Religions* (Harmondsworth, Penguin) 1984, pp. 550, £4.95, \$6.95, ISBN 0-14-951.106-7.

³ H. Waldenfels (ed.), *Lexicon der Religionen: Phänomene - Geschichte - Ideen* (Freiburg, Herder) 1987, xiv + 729, ISBN 3-451-20726-5.

⁴ H. Cancik, B. Gladigow, M. Laubscher (eds.), *Handwörterbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe* (Stuttgart, Kohlhammer) Bd. 1, 1988, pp. 504, ISBN 3-17-009553-6.

⁵ Mircea Eliade (Gen. Ed.), *The Encyclopaedia of Religion* (New York, Macmillan, and Collier Macmillan, London; the binding says Macmillan: Free Press) 1987, 15 vols. + vol. 16 Index, ISBN 0-02-909480-1 + ISBN 0-02-909890-4.

⁶ W. Bauer, *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur*, 6. völlig neu bearbeitete Auflage von Kurt u. Barbara Aland (Berlin-New York, W. de Gruyter), 1988, xxiv + 1795, DM. 148.-, ISBN 3-11-010647.

⁷ Ruth Reyna, *Dictionary of Oriental Philosophy*, 2 vols. in one, (New Delhi, Monshiram Manaharlal) 1984, xx + 419, Rs. 225.

⁸ H. Bechert, *Buddhismus, Staat und Gesellschaft in den Ländern des Theravada-Buddhismus*, Bd. 1 *Grundlagen, Ceylon (Sri Lanka)*. [The 1966 ed. said "Allgemeines und Ceylon"]. Mit einem Register versehen, unveränderter Nachdruck der Ausgabe von 1966 (Göttingen, Veröfentl. d. Seminars f. Indologie der Univ. Göttingen, 1988, xxi + 403. Softcover.

⁹ René de Berval (ed.), *Présence du Bouddhisme* (Paris, Gallimard) 1987, pp. 816, with 151 illustrations but no colour-plates.

¹⁰ R. Gombrich and G. Obeyesekere, *Buddhism Transformed: Religious Change in Sri Lanka* (Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press) 1989, xvi + 484, \$49.50, ISBN 0-691-07333-3.

¹¹ Lambert Schmithausen, *Alayavijnana: On the Origin and Early Development of a Central Concept in Yogacara Philosophy* (Tokyo, International Inst. f. Buddhist Studies), *Studia Philologica Buddhica*, Monograph Series vol. iv.a (ix + 241: Text) and vol. iv.b (pp. 243-700: Notes, Bibliography and Indices), 1987, ISBN 4-906267-20-3.

¹² Tsugunari Kubo, *Hokekyo Bosatsu Shiso-no Kiso* (Tokyo, Shunjusha) 1987, xvi + 325 + 7 pp. Index + 45 pp. English summary.

¹³ *Das Zusammentreffen mit Maitreya: die fünf Kapitel der Haimi-Version der Maitrisimit*. In Zusammenarbeit mit H. Eimer u. J.-P. Laut herausgegeben, übersetzt u. kommentiert von Geng Shi-min u. H.-J. Klimkeit, (Wiesbaden, Otto Harrassowitz, vol. 103 of *Asiatische Forschungen*) 1988. Teil (= vol.) i: Text, Übersetzung, Kommentar, xii + 333; Teil (= vol.) ii: Faksimiles und [türkische und Sanskrit] Indices.

¹⁴ Alan Sponberg & Helen Hardacre, *Maitreya: the Future Buddha* (Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Press) 1988, xvi + 304, ISBN 0-521-34344-5.

¹⁵ Irene Eber (ed.), *Confucianism: The Dynamics of Tradition*, (Macmillan New York and Collier-Macmillan London), 1986, pp. 234, ISBN 0-02-908780-5.

¹⁶ Julia Ching, *Konfuzianismus und Christentum* (Mainz, Grünewald), 1989, pp. 230, ISBN 3-7867-1442-8.

¹⁷ Christian Wolff, *Rede über die praktische Philosophie der Chinesen*, übersetzt, eingeleitet und herausgegeben von Michael Albrecht. Lateinisch-Deutsch. (Hamburg, Felix Meiner Verlag) 1985, cvi + 324, ISBN 3-7873-0629-3.

¹⁸ Sung-Hae Kim, *The Righteous and the Sage: A Comparative Study of the Ideal Images of Man in Biblical Israel and Classical China* (Seoul, Sogang Univ. Press), 1985, xv + 297.

¹⁹ Peter N. Gregory, *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought* (Honolulu, Univ. of Hawaii Press; Kuroda Institute Studies in East Asian Buddhism 5) 1987, x + 474, \$37.50, ISBN 0-8248-1118-6.

²⁰ Bernard Faure, *La volonté d'orthodoxie dans le bouddhisme chinois* (Paris, C.N.R.S.), 1988, pp. 318, Fr.Fr. 140, ISBN 2-222-04119-8. Softcover.

²¹ Hee-Sung Keel, *Chinul: The Founder of the Korean Son Tradition*, Seoul, 1984 (Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series 6), pp. 211, ISBN 0-89581-1545.

²² Robert E. Buswell Jr., *The Formation of Ch'an Ideology in China and Korea (The Vajrasamādhi-Sūtra; A Buddhist Apocryphon)* (Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press), 1989, xviii + 315, \$39.50, ISBN 0-691-97336-8.

²³ Stephen F. Teiser, *The Ghost-Festival in Medieval China*, (Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press) 1988, xvii + 275, \$37.50, ISBN 0-691-05525-4.

²⁴ Claudius Müller, unter Mitarbeit von Wu Shun-chi (eds.), *Wege der Götter und Menschen: Religionen im traditionellen China*, (Berlin, Museum f. Völkerkunde, Staatl. Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, no. 45 New Series of the Museum Publications), pp. 156, ISBN 3-496-01063-0. Softcover.

²⁵ Taiko Yamasaki, *Shingon: Japanese Esoteric Buddhism*, translated and adapted by Richard and Cynthia Peterson. Ed. by Y. Morimoto and D. Kidd (Boston & London, Shambhala), 1988, xviii + 244, \$19.35, ISBN 0-87773-443-7. Softcover.

²⁶ Edward Kamens, *The Three Jewels: A Study and Translation of Minamoto Tamenori's "Sanbō"* (Ann Arbor, Center for Japanese Studies, Univ. of Michigan), 1988, xii + 446, \$29.95, ISBN 0-939512-34-3.

²⁷ James C. Dobbins, *Jōdo Shinshū: Shin Buddhism in Early Japan*, (Bloomington, Indiana Univ. Press) 1989, pp. 242, \$35.-, ISBN 0-253-33186-2.

²⁸ Hajime Nakamura, *Ansätze modernen Denkens in den Religionen Japans* (Leiden, Brill), Beihefte d. ZRGG nr. 23, 1982, viii + 183, ISBN 90-04-06725-6.

²⁹ *The Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* (Nagoya, Nanzan Inst. f. Religion and Culture) vol. 14 nos. 2-3, 1987, and vol. 16 nos. 2-3, 1989, ISBN 0304-1042.

³⁰ *History of Religions* (Chicago, Chicago Univ. Pres), vol. 27 no. 3, Febr. 1988, pp. 227-253.

³¹ Nold Egenter, *Bauform als Zeichen und Symbol: nichtdomestikales Bauen im japanischen Volkskult* (Zurich, ETH), 1980, pp. 214, format 21 × 30 cm, ISBN 3-85676-013-1. Softcover.

³² Nold Egenter, *Göttersitze aus Schilf und Bambus* (Engl. title: *Sacred symbols of Reed and Bamboo*), Bern, Peter Lang, Swiss Asian Studies Monograph Series 4, 1982, pp. 152, ISBN 3-261-04821-2, format 29,5 × 21 cm. Softcover.

³³ Willem Otterspeer (ed.), *Leiden Oriental Connections 1850-1940* (Studies in the History of Leiden University), Leiden, Brill, 1989, pp. 391, D.Fl. 140.-, \$70.-. ISBN 90-04-09022-3.

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MUMME, Patricia Y., *The Mumukṣuppaṭi of Piḷḷai Lokācārya with Maṇavā-ḷamāmini's Commentary* – Bombay: Ananthacharya Indological Research Institute, 1987. viii + 227 pages, 70 rupees (US\$ 6.00).

Both these works are signal contributions to the modern study of South Indian Śrīvaiṣṇava religion, known to us from its early Tamil sources in

the Ālvārs' *prabandham* and the voluminous medieval literature of commentary and philosophical exegesis in Sanskrit and in the Tamil-Sanskrit hybrid literary language of *maṇipravāḷa* ("jewel and coral").

Yāmūnācārya, in the 10th century, marks a major turning-point in the evolution of this tradition. Supposedly the grandson of the first *ācārya*, Nāthamuni, the creator of the Śrīvaiṣṇava Tamil canon, Yāmuna was the single most important philosophical precursor of Rāmānuja and the first to provide, in Sanskrit, a reasoned theology linking the *prabandham* as well as Pāñcarātra with orthodox Vedānta. His treatise legitimizing Pāñcarātra, *Āgamaṣrāmāṇya*, was edited and translated by the late J.A.B. van Buitenen (1971), who did so much to bring Viśiṣṭādvaita into the mainstream of Western Indological research. Yāmuna's most important work, the *Ātmasiddhi*, is sometimes viewed as part of a triad of *siddhi* works, the other two being *Īśvarasiddhi* and *Samvitsiddhi*. All three have reached us only in incomplete form; but the *Samvitsiddhi*, a treatise in verse on the existence of the world (in relation to consciousness, *samvid*, the focus of the debate with the idealists), is the most mangled and fragmentary of the three. The present critical edition by Mesquita, who has published widely on Yāmuna and Viśiṣṭādvaita, is accompanied by a learned introduction, annotation, and translation as well as an attempt at reconstructing the arguments that must have been presented in the lost portions (largely with the help of surviving passages from *Ātmasiddhi* and a few references in Sudarśanasūri). The attempt is skillfully accomplished, and we are offered a convincing picture of the original structure of the text as a whole. In the absence of a new manuscript find, this is as close as we are likely to get to the original text. The *Samvitsiddhi* is a polemical text, arguing the relative realism of the Viśiṣṭādvaita against rival views, especially those of the Advaitins (tellingly referred to as "crypto-Buddhists", *saugatāḥ pracchannāḥ*) but also those of the "real" or "visible" (Yogācāra-) Buddhists, Sāṅkhyāyikas and Jainas.

Both streams of Tamil *bhakti*, Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva, laid great stress upon, and developed ritual and initiatory uses for, the primary *mantras* expressing homage to the deity. Thus Cuntaramūrttināyaṇār devotes *patikam* 48 of his *Tevāram*, on the shrine of Tiruppāṇṭikkōṭumuṭi, to the Śaiva *mantra* [oṃ] *namaḥ śivāya*; and several of the Ālvārs mention *namo nārāyaṇa* in their verses. But in the later Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition, an entire literature developed, mostly in *maṇipravāḷa*, explicating the esoteric significance of the three essential mantras: the *tirumantra* or *mūlamantra*, *oṃ namo nārāyaṇāya*; the *dvayam*, mentioning Nārāyaṇa joined with Śrī; and the *caramaśloka*, i.e. *Bhagavadgītā* 18.66. These works interpreting the *mantras* and their hidden meanings became known as *rahasyagranthas* (although

the term also applies to other works, not dealing with the *mantras*). The *rahasya* literature has been broadly discussed by K.K.A. Venkatachari in his well-known study of *Śrīvaiṣṇava Maṇipravāḷa* (1978, pp. 95-166). Patricia Mumme now offers a translation of one of the outstanding texts in this genre, Maṇavālamāmuni's *Tirumantrārtham* on Piḷḷai Lokācārya's *Mumukṣuppaṭi*. Both parent text and commentary reflect the point of view associated with the "southern" or Tēṅkalai school of Tamil Śrīvaiṣṇavism (although the final institutionalization of the schism between Vaṭakalai and Tēṅkalai may well be later than Maṇavālamāmuni, 1370-1443). Maṇavālamāmuni was one of the great creative figures in medieval Śrīvaiṣṇavism, though hardly any translations from his writings exist. One is thus grateful for the present work, and would have been even more so if the *maṇipravāḷa* text had also been reproduced—since editions of these works are not readily available in Western (or even south Indian) libraries. In her annotation to the translation and in the concise and lucid introduction, Mumme points to the theological issues in dispute between the Tēṅkalai masters and their opponents such as Vedānta Deśika (especially in his *Rahasyatrayasāra*); at stake, in particular, are questions relating to the status of the goddess Śrī or Lakṣmī (is she a *jīva*, an "atomic-sized soul", or an aspect of the god himself? – p. 20) and to the understanding of *prappatti*, the resort to god by his devotee— as a free act, requiring effort, on the part of the individual soul, or as subsumed within the deity's gracious gift of salvation. These are classic problems in Śrīvaiṣṇava theology, and it is striking to find them reformulated here in the context of the *mantras*. Two appendices give texts illustrating the evolution of the *rahasya* tradition: the *Aṣṭāśloki* of Parāśara Bhaṭṭar (with Sanskrit original!), and the *Nigamanappaṭi* of the great commentator Pēriyavāccāṇ Piḷḷai. As usual in books printed in India, the diacritics are somewhat erratic; in two places more serious misprints occur: p. 8, *śaranyah*, should probably read *śaranya*; p. 15, for *Tattvavanītam* read *Tattvanavanītam*. Not least among the many merits of this fine book is the stunning reproduction on the dust-jacket of an 18th-century Tanjavur glass-painting that shows Maṇavālamāmuni teaching, while the god Raṅganātha-Viṣṇu himself, in the form of a young child, pays respect to the master.

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EDITORIAL CHANGES

As our readers may know, at every five-yearly congress of the I.A.H.R., elections take place of the officers and Executive Board of the Association, and the Editors of the I.A.H.R. publications are appointed (viz. re-appointed).

Professors Heerma van Voss and Werblowsky, Editors since the summer of 1977, have decided to apply the healthy principle of rotation and to retire from their editorial duties after the completion of the December 1990 fascicle. Due notice of their intention having been given to the Executive Committee, the latter has invited Professor T. E. Lawson (Kalamazoo, MI, U.S.A.) to join Professor Kippenberg, and he kindly accepted.

Please note that as from **September 10th, 1990** the editorial address is: Numen, c/o Prof. Dr. H. G. Kippenberg, Universität Bremen, Fachbereich 9, Postfach 330440, D-2800 Bremen 33, BRD.

The Editors

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS — NOTICE OF PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

According to Article 8 of the constitution of the IAHR the statutes may be modified only by the General Assembly at the recommendation of the International Committee. The International Committee at its meeting in June 1988 at Marburg decided to make the following recommendations.

1) That the word “statutes” be dropped from the title and the text of the constitution, leaving, or being replaced, by the word “constitution” only.

2) That the phrase “for endorsement” be removed from the final sentence of the first paragraph of article 4c.

3) That the following sentence be added to Article 5: “A meeting of the Executive Committee requires a minimum attendance of five of its members.”

4) That the following sentence be added to Article 6: “A meeting of the International Committee requires a minimum attendance of ten members from a minimum of seven national associations.”

These recommendations will therefore be placed before the General Assembly of the IAHR at the XVI International Congress to be held in Rome, September 3-9, 1990.

A brief clarification of the second recommendation above may be of assistance. The sentence referred to runs as follows: “The International Committee, at its meeting just preceding the General Assembly, shall elect the Executive Committee and shall report this to the General Assembly for endorsement.” Thus it is quite clear that the Executive Committee is elected by the International Committee, which itself is composed of the elected representatives or appointees of the national associations constituting the IAHR. However it is not at all clear what “endorsement” by the General Assembly could mean. Since the General Assembly cannot elect an alternative Executive Committee, non-endorsement would be destructive if not meaningless. The recommendation set out above

seeks to remove this anomaly and thereby to clarify the democratic procedures of the IAHR. This clarification should be read in conjunction with the announcement regarding elections which is published below.

Notice of election procedures

The election procedures for the Executive Committee (including the officers) of the IAHR are set out in the constitution. In accordance with these the proposals of the Nominating Committee have been made known to the current members of the International Committee, that is, to the Presidents and the Secretaries of the associations affiliated to the IAHR and to the other ex officio or coopted members. The members of the International Committee may propose alternative nominations up to one month before the next Congress. It is not constitutional for alternative proposals to be made thereafter or during the Congress itself. Nominations will therefore be *closed* one month prior to the Congress. Any alternative nominations should be made in writing to the Secretary-General by a member of the International Committee before August 2nd 1990. The address of the Secretary-General is given in the IAHR Bulletin.

THE STUDY OF COMPARATIVE RELIGION
BY INDONESIAN MUSLIMS

A SURVEY

KAREL A. STEENBRINK

Religious studies were always highly estimated in Islam. Perhaps there is, besides the Jewish religion, no religion so concentrated on the holy book neither is there any religion, that keeps religious scholars in such a high esteem, as the islamic community. Seeking knowledge itself is a meritorious action. This knowledge, however, was usually confined to the common subjects of mysticism and ethics, law and dogmatics. A more philosophical or empirical approach in the field of religious studies was usually not stimulated before the 20th century and the interest in other religious traditions, outside the islamic, was seldom elaborated. – “The comparative history of religions is a Muslim creation” is quoted as a saying of Henry Laoust. After a glorious start with Shahrastani this creation was not always fostered and developed in the curriculum of religious studies in the Muslim world.¹ This article wants to present the major results of this study by Indonesian Muslims.

1. *The Prelude: Nuruddin ar-Raniri's Tibyan fi Ma'rifatu'l Adyan and some other works*

In the history of Indonesian Islam only one person wrote extensive works in the historical and apologetic tradition before the 20th century. This was the Indian scholar Nuruddin Muhammad b. Ali b. Hasanji b. Muhammad Hamid ar-Raniri (died 1658). Born in the mixed Indian-Arab community of Gujarat, he had a career as a scholar in the Malay world. The culminating point of his career was the position of Shaikhu'l Islam in the Sultanate of Aceh, a position held between 1637-1643. Among his works is the *Bustanus-Salatin*, a voluminous work, in seven books. The first two of these books present a history of the world. The first book is written in the

tradition of al-Kisa'i's *Qisasu'l 'anbiya*, with many pages on the creation of the pen, the tablet, the light of Muhammad etc. The second book follows the tradition of Tabari's *Annales*, starting with the history of the Persian, Greek, Arabian people before the coming of Islam; then presenting the history of Islam, year by year until the last event of this series: the execution of Al Hallaj in 309H (also the last major event, mentioned by Tabari himself!). Book two then also presents the history of the kings of India and Malaysia/Indonesia. From book three onwards this *Bustanus-Salatin* is written as a mirror for kings in the tradition of the *Nasihatu'l-muluk* by Al-Ghazali. Especially in the second book of the *Bustanus-Salatin* we find several passages that are of interest from the viewpoint of comparative religion. The second paragraph of the second book discusses the death of Sabaa, child of Kiyamurti or Gayomart, the first man according to the Persian tradition, who already was a son of Adam in Tabari's historical harmonization of the Semitic-Qur'anic and the Old Persian traditions. Kiyamurti/Gayomart then buries the corpse and lights a candle beside the grave: "this is the reason why all these people of the Majus worship the fire".²

Concerning the Jewish religion, this book gives no division into sects but only the stories of the prophets and most of these in a very brief manner. The Greek translation of the Bible, the septuagint, is mentioned, with its 72 translators. But no word about Ezra and the way he found the text of the Torah again.

As an example of his simplification we might here mention his discussion of Christianity: in the *Bustanus-Salatin* the history of Jesus as one of the prophets is written briefly. First we hear some stories about Zahariah, who became the father of John, when he was 100 years old. About John the Baptist only the story of his execution at the request of the daughter of Herodias is told. The only anecdote, related to Jesus is the sickness of his mother Mary, after Jesus was taken away at the age of 30 years and 3 months. As Mary was so sad, God sent Jesus back again for a while to console his mother.³ Having told this, our author immediately changes to the sacking of Jerusalem by Titus and then switches to the last of the prophets, Muhammad.

Much more interesting for the study of comparative religion is another work by Nuruddin ar-Raniri, his *Tibyan fi ma'rifatu'l adyan*.

This work⁴ has been written in the tradition of the well-known work by Shahrastani, *Kitab al milal wan-nihal*. Its immediate source, however, was not Shahrastani, but many passages were taken from a work by Abu Shakur as-Salimi, *Kitab at-Tamhid*.⁵ Ar-Raniri reorganized the material and sometimes also added some passages, like the one about Gujarat and the Hindus living there. Their religion is considered as coming from the prophet Abraham (a not uncommon Islamic etymology of the word Brahman). Through this etymology the Hindus in the Islamic sultanate of Gujarat could be considered as *ahlul kitab* or people of the book, bound to pay the special tax, but no subject of a holy war. Ar-Raniri also has some passages about Hamzah Fansuri and Shamsuddin of Pasai, his heretic predecessors, as well as some short notes about the pagan religion, still preserved in the mountainous areas of the island of Java.

In general, however, ar-Raniri followed the outline of Shahrastani and his tradition: the first part discusses the great religions of the world, outside Islam, starting with the religions, that have no holy book and no basis in revelation, to conclude with the Christian and Jewish religions. The second part presents a description of 72 Muslim sects, all of them deviating from the straight path of the sunni-belief. Very often his description is a caricature, sometimes even nonsensical. Raniri lived far away from the original sects, in time and place even so much further than Shahrastani and therefore could blame his adversaries without any resistance or defence from their side. The book is much more simple than the work by Shahrastani. The variety of topics is summarized in 128 pages, 8°, with 15 lines a page.

Even if we cannot find too many historical facts in the work by Shahrastani, Raniri's writing here is sometimes really strange. So his exposition about the three main sects of Christianity: Nestorians, Jacobinians and Melchionites. All three sects were founded by the three pupils of a certain (*fulan*) Jewish scholar, apparently Paul, but his name is not mentioned. This Jewish divine infiltrated into Christianity in order to divide it. He gave false and differing "secret doctrines" to his three most prominent pupils, Nestor, Jacob and Melchion and since then Christianity has been divided and was no longer a danger for the Jewish people. In his

story it was not Paul who was attacking the Christians, but in the beginning it was the Christians who were attacking the Jews. About Jesus himself, this work concentrates on the fact that Jesus was able to write the whole contents of the Torah, through direct revelation from God. When the Jewish people did not believe him, the Prophet Ezra appeared and confirmed the text of Jesus. But then the devil said to the believers that both Ezra and Jesus were Sons of God and so the heresy entered Christianity.

Something more is found in another work by the same Raniri. In his work on the meaning of the idea of spirit, *Asraru'l-Insan fi Ma'rifatir-ruh war-Rahman*,⁶ he also discusses more theologically the meaning of the title spirit, *Ruh*, for Jesus, as well as the meaning of three other sublime attributes for him (World of God or *kalima*, Messias and Light or *nur*).

The works of ar-Raniri are quite exceptional for Indonesian standards. In the catalogues of Arabic, Malay and Javanese manuscripts (the three main languages used by Indonesian muslims) we do not meet works in the tradition of heresiology and comparative religion other than the *Tibyan* before the 20th century.⁷ In the traveller's notes and works on history we do not find many notes on religion either. Of the first kind we might mention here the notes made by Ahmad Rijaluddin, translator and informant for the British Government in the Malay archipelago, about his travelling West, to Bengal, in 1810.⁸ His account of Calcutta does not give much information about mosques and muslims, but much about bathing resorts and brothels. The puritan Muslim also stressed that the women were naked during the bathing ceremonies, at some Hindu bathing places. He also accentuated some strange beliefs, such as the remark by Brahmins at the occasion of hard wind and choppy water in the river Ganges: "What sin have you committed to make the Gods of the Ganges angry?" (90-91) – Several Christian churches are mentioned, such as the one, where Christians come together "to pay their respects to the priest" (126-127) and another one, where Christians "make a great deal of noise as they recite their prayers." (135: compare this complaint with remarks of western people, now living in an Islamic city, about loudspeakers at the mosque!).

Another picture of Calcutta through the eyes of a Muslim is

found in the description of Munshi Abdullah, also translator for the British Government in Malaysia.⁹ His account of Calcutta is quite different from the one by Ahmad Rijaluddin: three of his four pages are devoted to the great mosque and the Muslims of Calcutta. About Hindus he only has some insulting remarks: women go naked (explained as: with bare breasts), use no toilets but sit shamelessly together on the coast to relieve themselves.

An example of the second genre, the histories, can be seen in the family chronicle, written by a West-Sumatran pepper-trader, who migrated to South-Sumatra at the end of the 18th century. This trader gives us some notes about cannibalism in that area.¹⁰ Another more or less historical work is the autobiography of Munshi Abdullah, already mentioned above. As he was in the British service, he presents several interesting descriptions of important rulers like Raffles and Lord Minto. His work also has an extensive description of the Cathedral of Singapore.¹¹ More comments on other cultures, esp. on European ones, as found in Malay literature, are collected by van der Linden.¹²

Also in Javanese literature some of these descriptions can be found, such as the episode in the Babad Suropati, where an Indonesian Muslim falls in love with his adoptive sister, daughter of the Dutch Governor-General. This relation is forbidden according to local customs and Islamic law, as they were nourished by the same mother, but then the girl says: "According to the Dutch religion, as long as we are of the same mind, it can be sanctified by religion, even though you are my adoptive brother. Let us go into this beautiful sleeping-chamber and enjoy the pleasure of love on the bed."¹³ Some more remarks can be found in the account of the Java-war, where Muslims fought against the Dutch.¹⁴ Very interesting too, is the story of the turbulence in the Hijaz in 1852, which resulted in an attack on the embassies of the "christian" countries in Jeddah and the murder on some diplomats, as well as the sending of the British Navy to Jeddah. A Javanese pilgrim, who came to Arabia to perform the hajj, wrote a rather long account about these events from the viewpoint of an outsider.¹⁵

These passages are quite interesting, but they do not provide us with a systematic and more complete description of other cultures and religions by Indonesian Muslims. The Indonesian Muslim did

a lot of travelling, but did not write much about it. So, there are no works of the standard of al Biruni or Ibn Batuta in the Islamic world of Indonesia until the end of the 19th century. Two works by Indonesians, however, are very interesting from the viewpoint of the study of religion. These are descriptions of folk-beliefs, folklore, local customs. The first is the *Serat Centhini*, one of the longest poems written in Javanese, counting about 150,000 lines, or 12 rather thick volumes, when published. It is the best known example of romances of vagrant students, telling about their encounters on the island of Java. These works stress the internal varieties and even conflicts within the Muslim community, they present descriptions of the last "Buddhist" and "Hindu" heremites on the island.¹⁶ The *Serat Centhini* was written by a small team, under the direction of the crown-prince of the Kingdom of Surakarta in the beginning of the 19th century. Its cultural environment was still absolutely free from Western influence.

Somewhat different is the description of Sundanese Customs by Haji Hasan Mustafa. This religious scholar and penghulu ("qadi") in West-Java was the local companion for Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, when he did his first research on Islam in Java, between 1889-1893. Probably at the request or the suggestion of the Dutch scholar, he wrote an extensive work about local Islam, customs and folklore in Western Java. In writing this he took a position, quite different from the religious scholars of his area, who usually only condemned all deviations from the islamic regulations. Haji Hasan Mustafa was a very broad-minded man with love for his country and tolerance and understanding for local variants of the international religion of Islam.¹⁷

2. *The first reaction on the modern studies of religion in the West: JIB, Mahmud Junus, Zainal Arifin Abbas and Prof. H. M. Rasjidi*

In the 1920's a number of students in secular high-schools started a Youth Organization for the Study of Islam (Jong Islamieten Bond or JIB). This group mostly consisted of children from the elite, who visited schools, where the language of instruction was Dutch. Their language of communication often was also Dutch. Their knowledge of Arabic was usually zero and even their knowledge of Malay and Javanese often very poor. They studied Islam mainly from works

by Maulana Muhammad Ali (the Ahmadiya of Lahore) in English, or from works by the orientalist. Their ideas on Islam were later very often criticized as too westernized. This is understandable if we look at their sources. I will not elaborate on this topic now, as one of my students, Drs. Abdurrachman in Yogyakarta, is writing a Ph.D.-thesis on this special group of young Muslim thinkers between 1925 and 1942.

Comparative Religion never had a strong position in the traditional education system in Indonesia. Until now it is not on the list of subjects to be taught in the *pesantren*, the islamic "colleges", the combination of "monasteries" and boarding-schools in the countryside, where still new religious scholars are trained in a classical way.¹⁸ Quite an exception here is the work by Mahmud Junus, *Al Adyan*.¹⁹ Mahmud Junus studied in Cairo in the 1920's. He did not (only) pursue religious studies, but also general sciences. After he returned to Indonesia, he started two schools in 1931, both providing a mixture: religious sciences as well as secular knowledge up to the level of a teacher's training college.²⁰ History of the world and also of Islam was one of the subjects taught in his schools, but the plan of the schools for 1931 does not yet mention comparative religion. A new plan, a curriculum for 1932, mentions *riwajat-riwajat agama* (stories or histories of religion) and this subject, only one hour in the highest grade of a 7-year-curriculum, is probably the starting point for his book *Al-Adyan*. The book was written in Arabic, being the language of instruction for the highest grades of the school.

In 77 pages all major religions are presented: starting with the Zoroastrians and the Sabaenas, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, Shinto in Japan and Fetishism in West-Africa: every area of the world having its own religion. The Jewish (30-42) and Christian (42-57) religions are discussed in a much more elaborated way than the other religions. Within Christianity the main divisions are different from the discussion of Shahrastani and ar-Raniri: not the old Nestorians and Melchionites, but the Protestants and Catholics are the main groups of Christians. Mahmud Junus does not mention his sources, but probably he had some Arab sources, that were taken from French studies. Islam is the last religion to be discussed at greater length (58-70). It is not

only the last, but also the best (or: most beautiful, *ahsân*) religion. Among the sects of Islam a quite lengthy discussion is devoted to the Ahmadiyah, both the Lahore and the Qadiyan branch. By way of appendix some information is given about the theosophy (70-77).

Although the work by Mahmud Junus is written in a simple style, for the highest grade of a teacher's training college, it is quite interesting as a specimen of a new style and orientation in comparative religion. It certainly had as its (mediate) sources, books written by non-muslims; it is written in close contact with a plural world, where non-muslims are real beings and it offers quite accurate information about them. Also in the Islamic world it is quite close to modern developments: just as ar-Raniri has some notes about Hamzah and Shamsuddin, so Mahmud Junus has some information about the Ahmadiyyah, being the most important heretic sect in the Islamic world of his days.

Mahmud Junus starts with a definition of religion or more precisely, *tadayyun*, or religiousness, as a human quality. He presents a rather psychological definition: "Religiousness is the natural inclination of man to accept the existence of a Being, more powerful than himself or other human beings." This religiousness is a sublime human quality and originates from the earliest times of mankind. In the beginning man thought that there were many gods and that God was behaving like a more powerful man. Later on, when man made progress in knowledge, he recognized that there could be only one God, who is the cause of all causes. This concept of religion is the concept of the times with an evolutionistic outlook. Nothing is said here about the first revelation, given to Adam, as the beginning of all religion! Mahmud Junus seems to imitate (probably indirectly through some Arab author) the evolutionist outlook, that dominated much of the science of religion from Tylor until Durkheim and Malinowski.

A very important person of this period is also the author, publisher and teacher Haji Zainal Arifin Abbas. Zainal Arifin lived in Medan from about 1900 until about 1970. He wrote a 5-volume Life of Muhammad and a Qur'an-commentary, that probably remained unfinished, but saw its first 9 volumes (of the planned 30) published. He also wrote a very voluminous book on *Perkembangan Fikiran terhadap Agama* (The Development of Ideas Concerning

Religion).²¹ In the first part of the book, discussing the definition of religion and the realm of the spiritual, he very often follows Mustafa Abdur-Raziq in his *Ad-Din wa'l-Wahyu wa'l-Islam*. Through this guide we get a series of opinions of more than 100 thinkers, scholars and charlatans. Zainal Arifin usually presents his selection of quotations without any comment, without context and criticism. Sometimes we get quite strange words, due to the transliteration of the Arabic: three of the Gods of the Greek religion were Apollo, Delphes and Zuess²² and the concept of *mana* in the discussion about Durkheim mentioned as the concept of *mani* and identical with *makna* (both Arabic and Indonesian for “meaning”). A special chapter is devoted to the development of ideas in the field of religion in the West (although a number of Western scholars have already been mentioned before). Here Descartes is followed by a certain Venilone, Jocques Benicte Bosuette (sic!), Leibnitz, Newton, Clark (sic for Samuel Clarke), Rocke (sic, in both editions, probably for John Locke, as the year 1690 is mentioned, when Locke published his main work *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*), Voltaire, Rousseau, the astronomist Herschel, Herbert Spencer and one Leneitte. Of all these persons ten to thirty lines are translated without introduction or commentary. After the more general part Zainal Arifin starts a discussion of individual religions: the religions of Egypt in former times, India, Buddhism, and then the Chaldaean, Hebrew and Persian religions. It is astonishing to see that such an incomplete and confusing book which not only presents its material in disorder and without internal consistency, but often completely false, finally received two reprints. The reason is mentioned at the beginning of the third edition: by a decision of the Ministry of Religious Affairs the book became the textbook for all Indonesians who wanted to become a teacher of religion. Obviously it was the one and only book on the topic available at the time.

Thousands of Muslim students probably read the book, studied it and passed examinations by way of such a guide. Dozens, and it may well be hundreds of teachers, had to use it as a weekly guide in their lessons. Whether we like this book or not, we have to consider all these facts in our judgment and evaluation of the history of the study of comparative religion in modern Muslim Indonesia.

Apart from the small handbook of Mahmud Junus and the larger one by Zainal Arifin Abbas, some other authors have to be mentioned here. One of them is Muhammad Hatta, an economist, who received his degree in Rotterdam, Holland and then became active in the nationalist movement. He was the first vice-president of the Indonesian Republic. During a period of internment by the Dutch colonial power (1934-1942), he wrote a series of three booklets on the History of Greek Philosophy. Why did this grandson of a respected *Shaykh* of a *tariqa* or mystical order, write about Greek philosophy and not about Islam? He did not give the answer to this question. He only stated that in the midst of his fellow-prisoners he gave lectures on economy and found that not enough food for the spirit. So, he also started a course on philosophy in the Camp of Detention, *Boven Digul*, in the Western part of Irian. He had good books: three works by Windelband and several good books on philosophy in Dutch. He understood these books and wrote intelligent summaries without his own comment. On the whole his account is very abstract and not at all related with the religious world of Muslim-theology, but more or less the same style as Windelband!

There were some more works, summarizing western philosophy: the medical doctor Abu Hanifah wrote a history of (Western) philosophy.²³ Takdir Alishahbana, alumnus of a teacher's training college and a faculty of law, active as a poet and later a professor of Indonesian literature, also wrote some philosophical works. He is known as someone, who wanted to open Indonesian culture to Western influences. His summary of Western philosophy was published in 1946.²⁴ Conservative Muslim circles sometimes considered him as anti-muslim²⁵, but in the 1980's he was invited by Dr. Harun Nasution to be professor of Philosophy at the Postgraduate Department of the Jakarta Institute of Islamic Studies.

Men like Zainal Arifin Abbas, Abu Hanifah and Sutan Takdir were not highly respected religious leaders with many adherents. They produced many publications, probably also had some influence, but they did not have a strong foothold in any mass-organization. Through their writings, ideas about philosophy and sociology of religion came into the "collective memory" of Indonesian Muslims. Their recordings were not always correct and very often they did not try to accommodate these ideas to an islamic envi-

ronment. Therefore these ideas often remained a “*Fremdkörper*” in the Islamic culture. Students learned definitions by heart and then very often neglected the contents. Still, this reception is a remarkable fact in the history of the meeting of cultures and religions, as well as in the history of the development of Islam.

More influential surely was Prof. Dr. Haji Muhammad Rasjidi. As a young man he finished his secondary school and then studied religion and philosophy at Cairo University between 1931 and 1938.²⁶ He became the first minister of religion in 1945, had a diplomatic career, then as ambassador in Cairo wrote his thesis under Louis Massignon (1956), was a visiting professor in McGill and finally became Professor of Islamic Studies at the Universitas Indonesia of Jakarta. In 1965 he wrote a book on *Philosophy of Religion*.²⁷ Until now the book has been the most important textbook on the subject. In fact Rasjidi’s book is a free translation of the work by David Trueblood, *Philosophy of Religion*, as also stated by Rasjidi himself on p. 219 at the beginning of the bibliography. A reading of Rasjidi’s book, together with the “original” by Trueblood shows some interesting facts. Both in the grand design as well as in most details Trueblood’s work could be accepted by the Muslim in Indonesia. There are a number of differences, partly due to misunderstanding, but also showing differing viewpoints. In the title of the third part and very often in this part, the original “challenges to faith” have been translated by “*keragu-raguan terhadap agama*”, or “doubts about faith”. So Rasjidi’s description of doctrines like Marxism is more negative than Trueblood’s. In many places Rasjidi made adaptations to the Islamic and Indonesian situation. One example is the passage, where he discusses the idea, expressed by Trueblood as the justification for sending foreign missionaries to the “heathen”. In his book Rasjidi translates “heathen” with “nations, with a population, that officially adheres to the Islamic religion”. Protest against proselytism is one of the topics, often found in the writings of Prof. Rasjidi and also in this book he seizes the opportunity to elaborate on the idea.²⁸ Very often the translation is very flat. Trueblood’s sentence “The God of Plato is not very exciting and the truth is that he is not the Judeo-Christian God at all,” is translated by “*Tuhan*

Plato bukan Tuhan agama Jahudi dan Kristen'' (The God of Plato is not the God of the Jewish and Christian religion).

In the field of Indonesian Muslim adaptations of psychology and sociology of religion we also have to mention here Sidi Gazalba, who studied literature at the Universitas Indonesia of Jakarta in the 1950's and wrote a thesis with the title: *The Mosque as the Center of Worship and Culture*.²⁹ In this book he wants to present a picture of Islam as a perception of the world and the hereafter, that is not restricted to religion in its confined sense, but as a guideline for all worldly actions too. Therefore he also designed a concept of science, where the religious sciences will be integrated into all "other" sciences. He therefore wrote a new central book: *Islam, the Integration of Science and Culture*. The central theme of this book was elaborated upon in a series of seven more books, discussing various sciences. One of these books is devoted to the social sciences or, as called by him, the science of culture.³⁰ In these last books we find many summaries of social sciences, as taught in Europe and America: culture in its broad meaning is defined as accepted in sociology and anthropology. Central concepts are acculturation, change of culture, local and national culture. Gazalba wrote a good textbook, for a large part taken from Ralph Beals and Harry Hoyer, *An Introduction to Anthropology*.

Besides this, Gazalba is sometimes quite successful in combining ideas from the Islamic tradition with the ideas of modern anthropology, such as in the discussion of acculturation, combined with the idea of *bid'ah* (heresy, litt. something "new" in the religion).³¹ Gazalba wrote at the end of the Sukarno-period (1945-1965), when in politics there was an atmosphere of harmony between secular, religious and communist groups. He was fiercely Islamic, but quite open to Western ideas as well. In the 1970's he moved to Malaysia, where he is now a lecturer at the Islamic International University, which also promotes the integration of Islamic and other sciences. He very often discussed the results of western social sciences, but, as far as I can see now, he did not pay attention to scholars in the field of the science of religion as Durkheim, Otto, Wach. For this study I could not read all his books and therefore the final judgment about his endeavours has to be postponed.

3. 1960-1988: *Prof. Dr. Abdul Mukti Ali and the Study of Comparative Religion at the National Institute of Islamic Studies*

In 1960 the Ministry of Religious Affairs founded the IAIN: *Institut Agama Islam Negeri* or National Institute for Islamic Studies. This Institute was in fact the combination of two minor activities until that time: a school for officials of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (especially judges at religious courts) and the Faculty of (Islamic) Theology at the Islamic University of Yogyakarta. The IAIN was founded in Yogyakarta, but very soon expanded and in 1988 there were 14 IAIN in all major cities of Indonesia, with many establishments in other places. These 14 Institutes then had about 75,000 students, while the staff was also working at many private academics and universities, where the same curriculum was also started, with about the same number of students. To give an example: the IAIN of Yogyakarta has some 6000 students and cannot accept more than 1000 new students each year. For the 1988-1989 academic year not less than 4000 young men and women applied for entrance and enrolled for the entrance-examinations!

The IAIN is divided into 5 faculties: most students take their courses in the faculty of Shari'ah, or Islamic Law and in the Faculty of Tarbiyah, or Education. The former provides an education for the Islamic courts, the latter for a place within the very extended system of education, which is administered by the Ministry of Religious Affairs.³² The third faculty is the faculty of Adab, Islamic Languages and History. In fact this faculty provides an academic course on Arabic. As this study is considered to be very difficult with not many possibilities for a further career, only very few students apply for this study. The fourth faculty is that of Da'wah (promotion of faith) and the fifth of Usuluddin, the Basics of Faith. In most places this last Faculty has again two sub-faculties: a) Comparative Religion; b) *Aqidah dan Filsafat*, Dogmatics and Philosophy.

In 1960 Dr. Abdul Mukti Ali was nominated to become the first dean of the sub-faculty of Comparative Religion in Yogyakarta and he was also asked to design the curriculum for the study there. The students were introduced in the basic knowledge about Islam, then the basics of comparative religion, Christian religion (divided into four different disciplines: general introduction into Christianity,

called *Kristologi*, history of the church, Bible interpretation, introduction to modern Christian theology), Buddhism and Hinduism and *Kebathinan*, or Indonesian mystical sects.

For Comparative Religion finally the book by Joachim Wach, *The Comparative Study of Religion*, became the classical book. Many students complained about its complex style and its many examples taken from the history of Christianity or other religions, which they were not acquainted with. The book was also translated twice into Indonesian, neither of these being wholly satisfactory. Whatever might be its result, it is clear that Mukti Ali chose for a tradition in the science of religion, which was very close to (Christian) theology. Not only did Wach have his great sympathy, but also the ideas of Father Schmidt and the concept of "primitive monotheism" (*Urmonotheismus*). Besides that, he always wanted to bring about a link between the study of religion and the promotion of interreligious dialogue. This might be the reason, why Boland, in his discussion of Mukti Ali, refuses to label him as a scholar of comparative religion, but characterizes him as a designer of a Muslim Theology of Religion.³³

In advance of a more detailed and comprehensive study of the contribution of A. Mukti Ali to the development of modern Muslim thinking in Indonesia, we here want to put forward some notes about several of his writings in the field of comparative religion. The first article of importance here is probably the one published in *AL DJAMI'AH* (after 1972: *Al Jami'ah*), the bulletin of the IAIN of Yogyakarta. In its first year (1962) Mukti Ali wrote an article about *The Origins of Religion*.³⁴ The literature quoted here is quite secondary: G. Atkins, *Procession of Gods*; Lewis Browne, *The Believing World*; E. D. Soper, *Religions of Mankind*. There are no quotations from classical or standard works. Father Schmidt, mentioned in a very positive way in later writings, is not yet present here. The whole idea of evolution is rejected. Especially Samuel Zwemer, *The Origin of Religion* from 1935 is mentioned positively with the addition: "untuk menjusun uraian ini kami pergunakan sistem dan metode Samuel M Zwemer" (for the writing of this article we used the systematics and methods of Samuel M. Zwemer).³⁵ Surely Zwemer, the aggressive missionary among Muslims will rejoice in heaven, hearing the remarks of such a prominent Muslim! The

idea of evolution finally is declared not to be relevant for the religious ideas: "Idée tentang Tuhan itu tidak melalui proses evolusi. Tetapi disamping keterangan 2 dari Kitab suci, maka sebenarnya dengan akal saja" (The concept of God did not come to us through a process of evolution, but only by way of the information we receive in the holy scriptures and besides that through our own reasoning).

A second publication is called *On the Study of Comparative Religion*.³⁶ This booklet is the elaboration of a speech delivered at the 4th Anniversary of the Yogyakarta IAIN, 12 July 1964. Boland already presented a summary of the ideas presented here,³⁷ and therefore, we will only give some additional remarks. The books by Atkin and Soper are represented in long quotations. Probably through the works of these scholars the ideas of many other scholars are quoted, such as Max Muller, E. B. Tylor, Herbert Spencer and Emile Durkheim. In the field of terminology, Mukti Ali makes a distinction between *History of Religion* (mostly the collection of facts), *Comparative Religion* (deeper understanding through comparison), while *Philosophy of Religion* has to look for the final truth, but not in an apologetic sense. Surely the question of truth is the one to be discussed in the philosophy of religion.³⁸ How this is related with the question of truth, to be answered by theology, is not quite clear in the writings of Mukti Ali. In his writings on Comparative Religion, he is often giving an inventory without presenting the final solution to problems. In his address of 1964 he also gave an inventory of Muslim Comparative Religion, starting with ash-Shahrastani. He finally gave a personal consideration of a theme, that would be repeated several times: Orientalism and Occidentalism. He summarized some of the stronger and weaker points of "Orientalism", warned against too easy a condemnation of Orientalism and the "self-isolationism" that might be the result of the critical attitude towards some of the negative aspects of orientalism. Indonesian scholars themselves, and especially the IAIN has to start the study of "Occidentalism" as the right answer towards Orientalism. A thorough knowledge of western science, acquired in a critical attitude is the right implementation of the idea of Occidentalism. This is finally worked out quite poetically in a combination of Kipling's "East is East and West is West, and never the twain

shall meet,” with the text of the Qurʾan (2,115): “Unto God belong the East and the West and whithersoever ye turn, there is God’s mercy.”³⁹

A third important publication of Mukti Ali is an address, originally held at the ceremony of Muhammad’s Ascension Day on 8 January 1962, published as a special booklet in 1969.⁴⁰ In present-day Indonesia the celebration of Muhammad’s Ascension is often used to give an explanation about the relation between religion and science, the miracles, and the supernatural. Mukti Ali here takes a firm stand against easy apologetics. On page 20-28 we find here a sound plea for honest studies, without easy apologetics. Much of it is inspired by the exposition of W. C. Smith in his *Islam in Modern History*.⁴¹

The plea for accepting good elements from other religions is found on every page of another publication, *Several Problems of Modern Islam in Indonesia*.⁴² Here Mukti Ali stresses the better schools, organizations and socio-economic activity of the Christians in Indonesia and he hopes that the Muslim will not try to find easy apologies, but make efforts to imitate these good initiatives and even improve them.

A fine exercise in Comparative Religion, relating Christian and Muslim concepts, is Mukti Ali’s small booklet, *On the Unity of God in the Qurʾan*, originally an address at the Protestant Theological Institute of Yogyakarta in 1968.⁴³

In 1971 Mukti Ali became Minister of Religious Affairs. His speeches and major decisions of this period are collected in nine books, with the title *Agama dan Pembangunan di Indonesia*, (Religion and Development in Indonesia). The title of this series has been taken from the general terminology for the government in the years after 1965, when Suharto took over the presidency from Sukarno. Sukarno, considered as the president who made Indonesia an independent and united state, was succeeded by Suharto, who in 1983 received the title of “Father of National Development”. Economic development was then the major task for all ministries, including the Ministry of Religious Affairs. In many addresses this theme of religion and development was mentioned. Mukti Ali often referred to Max Weber as the scholar, who stressed the decisive influence of religious ideas in the dynamics of a new economic

structure, by his study on the influence of Protestant Ethics on the Rise of Capitalism. In the same way Islam should become the central stimulus for economic development in Indonesia.⁴⁴

We find the scholar of Comparative Religion also in the Masterplan for the Policy of the Ministry of Religion from 1974.⁴⁵ In the definition of religion three aspects are mentioned: creed, ritual and ethics. The basic element of religion is faith, expressed in a creed. This creed develops into a ritual and both are at the beginning of ethics, that is to be found in the books, revealed through the prophets. Religion is faith in a monotheistic God (as also put down in the Indonesian Constitution) and groups who do not (yet) believe in one God, like atheists and animists, have to receive (re)education as one of the activities of the Ministry. Even in his formulation the influence of comparative religion is shown: he uses the words *credo* and *ritus*, from the Western-Christian world, besides the arab *akhlaq* for ethics.

In his speeches for academic institutes Mukti Ali several times propagated the importance of the methods of social sciences. At the same time he acknowledged the weak points, found in contemporary Indonesian studies. On several occasions he referred to the four weaknesses of social sciences in Indonesia, summarized by Selo Sumarjan, a professor of social sciences: 1) poor libraries; 2) lecturers, who do much teaching, but no research; 3) no scientific discussion; 4) not enough knowledge of foreign languages. In fact, according to Mukti Ali, the same situation is found in the science of religion.⁴⁶ He often showed an ambivalent relation towards social sciences. Research of religion has to be multi-disciplinary, with a major role played by the social sciences. But this has also its shortcomings: usually the social scientist considers religion as something, that originates in human factors. This, however, is not a real and deep understanding of religion and does not produce a proper understanding of the special character of religion. On the other hand, specialists in the field of religion, are often working in a too deductive manner, with only an interest in theory and no feeling for the empirical side of religious studies. The new science of religion will only result from a meeting of both sciences.⁴⁷

After seven years of political activities in Jakarta, Mukti Ali returned to his academic chair in Yogyakarta in 1978. He did not

write voluminous books, but, besides lecturing in his Institute, he delivered many speeches on various occasions. In 1987 20 speeches were published and for our purpose especially one is quite important: a speech on the method of research of religion.⁴⁸ Major reference for this speech was an article, by two Catholic priests, on the suitability of the method of "ground Research" for pastoral research.

Another short publication with nearly the same title: *The Study of Religion in Indonesia*,⁴⁹ gives more information about the present state of religious studies in Indonesia.

The last publication in this field to be mentioned here, is his *The Study of Comparative Religion in Indonesia*.⁵⁰ In this book his major reference is the study of Joachim Wach: *The Comparative Study of Religions*. The bibliography of Wach is reprinted here and many passages about methodology are free translations of the work of Wach which is used as a textbook at the Yogyakarta IAIN.⁵¹ The book only gives very brief information about the history of the study of comparative religion in Indonesia. It is rather written as a methodological programme, stating how the study should be carried out. By way of comparison much information is given about Orientalism, related to Indonesia.⁵²

The way Mukti Ali uses Wach is sometimes confusing. Thus he mentions Horney (1885-1952) and Allport (born in 1897) as "contemporary scholars of psychology, who nowadays make their adaptations of the theories of Freud and Jung".⁵³ In such phrases apparently Wach's statements of the 1950's are taken over as such.

Between the different terms, such as Science of Religion, History of Religion, Comparative Study of Religion, he does not see much difference. In Indonesia the term Comparative Study of Religion has become common and therefore is used by him. The great ideas in the methodology of the science of religion are still the same as in his earlier writings. In the end he stresses the dialectics or ambivalence in the science of religion: science of religion is never science for the sake of science only. Its ultimate purpose must be the stimulation of worship in its broad sense (*'ibadah*).⁵⁴

The students and assistants of Mukti Ali

Around Mukti Ali several assistants and former students did some valuable work for the integration of the science of religion in

the Muslim world: Harith Abdoussalaam wrote several good articles, in which he presented Phenomenology of Religion following the tradition of (again) Wach, Eliade, but also van der Leeuw and Bleeker to the Indonesian public.⁵⁵ Assistants of Mukti Ali wrote a series of mimeographed books on various religions in the early 1980's and a renewed version of these was published as a printed book, discussing all major religions in the world.⁵⁶ These books generally give information based on publications in Western languages, mostly English. So, nearly all of it is secondary literature, for the use of students and usually without any special Muslim comments or viewpoints on these facts.

Other activities within the ministry of religious affairs

Dr. Harun Nasution, the best-known professor from the Jakarta IAIN, also studied at McGill, where he received his Ph.D.-degree in 1968.⁵⁷ His main interest is the modern history of Islamic thought in the Middle East. He also wrote a book on Philosophy of Religion.⁵⁸ Compared with the book by Prof. Rasjidi, this book is much more Islamic and much more the author's own work. In fact Harun's book is a collection of six speeches on philosophical themes, related to religion, such as the essence of spirit, God's will and the free will of man, the philosophical evidence for the being of God. He gives no footnotes and in his bibliography we find mostly books out of the 1940's and 1950's, such as Bishop Fulton Sheen, Bellon (a Dutch philosopher), Warren Nelson Nevius, Kaufman with the 1961 edition of his *Critique of Religion and Philosophy* and E. E. Kellet's *A Short History of Religions*, published in 1962 by Penguin Books. Among the 13 books mentioned only one is in Arabic, Abdul Karim Katib's, *Qadiyatu'l lawhiya baina'l falasifa wa'l din*, from 1962. Only the second chapter has some relations with Comparative Religion in the sense discussed here: there the concept of God is discussed in an encyclopaedical way, with keywords such as dynamism (and the concept of mana), animism, polytheism, henotheism, monotheism, deism, pantheism, theism, naturalism, atheism and agnosticism.

In 1975 Mukti Ali, as minister of religious affairs, founded the *Litbang* or Section of Research within his department. Since 1977-1978 this section held a regular training in field-research for officials of the department of religious affairs. Participants in the

courses received a theoretical introduction into the methods of research for three months and then had to carry out field-research themselves, for six months. There were about 20-25 participants yearly. Several publications with the results of this research were published.⁵⁹ Most of these research-projects studied aspects of local islamic lore, very often with a negative undertone (these practices do not conform to the real and pure doctrine of Islam), but the reports were mostly written in a quite "objective" and descriptive way, without much theological reasoning.

Another project of field-training was the one, sponsored by the Ford Foundation in Banda Aceh and later also in Ujung Pandang. Lecturers at faculties of social sciences, but also from several IAIN in Indonesia came together during one year for a training in methodology and practice of field-research.⁶⁰ Several of these studies are very interesting from the viewpoint of description of local Islam.

One of the subjects, taught at the IAIN is called *Aliran Kepercayaan*. With the word "kepercayaan"⁶¹ several groups of religious movements are indicated: rests of "primitive" or tribe-religions are now formalized and more or less recognized as official "faith"-group. On the island of Java *kepercayaan* is the name for a number of groups, who stick more to the traditional Javanese traditions than to strict Islam. Finally, *kepercayaan* is also the name for new religious movements around some charismatic leaders, comparable with the Unification Church in Korea or the Movement around Bhagwan Sri Rajneesh in India.⁶² All these groups are considered as non-islamic by most Muslims. The strategy propagated by Muslim leaders, however, is quite different. Especially the representatives of the second kind, the Javanese mystical movements, are considered as doubtful: some scholars (headed by Dr. Mukti Ali) like to stress the Islamic element in these groups and they call for a Muslim approach, where the right complaints against the main trend of Islam are recognized. "Present-day Islam is too legalistic and formal. If we want to make these people of the aliran *kepercayaan* more islamic, then we have to stress the mystical elements in Islam!". This is the approach advocated by Mukti Ali. Professor Rasjidi has another approach. He is afraid of syncretism, of a harmony, where true Islamic values are praised, but not fol-

lowed. He wants these *kepercayaan* groups denounced as not islamic and subject for a coordinated effort to make them Islamic.⁶³ Several books have been published as textbooks for the study of these *kepercayaan* at the IAIN. The best known is by Kamil Kartapradja, who was also involved in the inquiry of the ministry of justice into these groups (suspect of communism as well as heterodoxy). The style of his writing is very informative. His book is filled with facts, but the book clearly shows no sympathy with the subject of his study, to say the least.⁶⁴

4. *The Applied Theology of Dawam Rahardjo and LP3ES*

LP3ES is one of the most outspoken NGO's (Non-Governmental Organization) in the field of socio-economic research and development cooperation. The organization is active in socio-economic research in the countryside, often in cooperation with the Islamic boarding-schools, the *pesantren*. During the period 1975-1985 Dawam Rahardjo, by discipline an economist, was the chairman of the organization. He held the opinion that religious values should support the economic development.

In May 1983 he organized a meeting in Jakarta to discuss the idea of an applied theology and therefore he invited a number of scholars in the field of religion, both from Islam and from the Christian groups. He explained that, besides theoretical sociology, now sociologists also develop theories and methods to do research in sociology that can be applied immediately. Then he started his analysis of the theology of liberation in Latin America as a combination of sociology, theological thinking and models for social and political action. Could theology (and especially islamic theology) function as a mediator between theory and action? Is there a possibility for an applied theology in Islam?

After Dawam Rahardjo had explained his grand vision, Prof. Dr. Harun Nasution started to explain, that the Islamic sciences were divided into two main disciplines: *fiqh* or Islamic Law studies the shari'ah, the regulations made by God for man. *Kalam*, the dogmatic part of Muslim thinking, which is commonly called theology, only studies about God: how He has to be conceived, His oneness, His attributes, as Creator, Knower. This theology has

nothing to say for this world and therefore an applied theology is not possible. For all things applied, one should call for a specialist in the field of Islamic law and Harun Nasution did not consider himself to be such a person. Harun Nasution said this very clearly and firmly. After his speech the whole idea was left aside, at least for the Islamic aspect of it.

Although this time Dawam Rajardjo was not successful, this event gives a picture of this man: a man of action, not an academic scholar in the field of religion. But also a man, who certainly is involved in the study of the reality of religion, for the sake of the implementation of its ideals. He wrote several interesting articles on anthropology of religion.⁶⁵ Besides that he wrote a number of meditations on the Qur'an, where he tries to establish a sound combination between social sciences and the text of the Qur'an.⁶⁶ The articles deserve a better study and more serious attention than I can give them here.

Dawam was also editor of the monthly PRISMA. In 1984, in a special issue of this magazine, a number of young Muslim thinkers were pictured. Of the 10 young religious leaders, only two were religious specialists by education and profession. The other were mostly social scientists, originating from orthodox families and with enough religious knowledge to become accepted also in this field. Quite a few of them studied political sciences or history in the United States. Nearly the same group was studied in the most outstanding book on modern Muslim thinking in Indonesia: *Opening the new Way: the Reconstruction of Islamic Thinking in the Suharto-Period*.⁶⁷ Here we find, that Islamic ideas are often reformulated with the help of social sciences, but very seldom with the special vocabulary of Western scholars in the field of religious studies. Clifford Geertz is very well known, but only by his work *Religion on Java*, not the more theoretical studies of religion. Peter Berger and Robert Bellah are sometimes quoted or mentioned, but they do not function as important points of reference. Is this younger generation less dependent on translations of Western books, less close to the science of religion as developed in the West?

By way of conclusion

1. The group, which shows affinity to the study of comparative religion, as carried out in the Western academic world, is rather confined: only some religious specialists.

2. The discussion with the results of Western science of religion is not held on the basis of the best results thereof, but very often on the basis of secondary literature. Very often also on the basis of books which that are not in use any more in the West.

3. Comparative Religion is mostly concentrated on the study of religion outside Islam and is considered as a help and a tool to study religion of communities outside the Muslim community. The study usually has no relevance for the understanding of one's own religion.

4. There is a positive relation between the study of comparative religion and religious dialogue. This dialogue is considered as the most important practical goal of the study of comparative religion. – Apologetics are not very often the direct outcome of these studies.

5. The Islamic tradition of the 20th century has partly broken with the isolationism of religious studies. Sociology, psychology, as studied in the academic tradition of the West, are becoming an integral part of religious studies. In this study we have seen the first results of this encounter. There is a variety of receptions and reactions. This process is certainly a major development in the history of religion in the 20th century.

6. Since the 1930's comparative religion already had relations with the religions of India and Japan. Representatives of these religions were active in this field. In the Muslim-countries the response was of a later date. Perhaps there is no Muslim community more open to this kind of study than the Indonesian Muslim community. Until now they had mostly been recipients. They were reading the Western books, wrote about it, but were not yet full participants in the development of this science. It may be expected, that the next generation of Indonesians will not only have a fuller understanding of Western scholarship but will also be more active with their own contributions.

2313 TK Leiden, March 1989
De Sitterlaan 29

KAREL A. STEENBRINK

¹ The quotation from Laoust is taken from a review of Shahrastani translations by J. Davies in the *Bulletin on Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa*, 6 (1988) no 4, p. 39.

² The *Bustanus-Salatin* has never been published in full. R.J. Wilkinson published the first two books in Arabic script in Singapore 1899; I published part of the second book (the passage on the Jewish and Christian religion) in my final lecture as a guest professor at the National Institute of Islamic Studies in Yogyakarta, 1981-1988: *Kitab Suci atau Kertas Toilet, Nuruddin ar-Raniri dan Agama Kristen*, Yogyakarta IAIN Sunan Kalijaga Press, 1988, esp. 30-42; fasl 13 of the second book was published by Teuku Iskandar, *Bustanu's-Salatin, Bab II, Fasal 13*, Kuala Lumpur, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1966; part of the fourth book was published by Russell Jones, *Nuru'd-din ar-Raniri, Bustanu's-Salatin Bab IV Fasal 1*, Kuala Lumpur, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka. The rest of Book IV was studied in the Ph.D. Thesis of C.A. Grinter at the London School of Oriental and African Studies, 1979.

³ This seems to be a reference to the story in the Gospel of John, 20,11-18 with a change of Mary Magdalena into Mary, mother of Jesus.

⁴ The Malay text has been published in facsimile, with an introduction in Dutch by P. Voorhoeve, *Twee Maleise Geschriften van Nuruddin ar-Raniri, in Facsimile Uitgegeven met Aanteekeningen*, Leiden, Brill, 1955. Part of this has been published in transliteration in K. Steenbrink, *Kitab Suci atau Kertas Toilet*, p. 43-48. Mrs. Alef Theria Wasim MA of the Yogyakarta Institute of Islamic Studies now prepares a Ph.D. thesis on this work.

⁵ Voorhoeve, *op. cit.* p. 9; GAL I, 419.

⁶ Published in Malay with Arabic characters in the Ph.D.-thesis of Tud-jimah, *Asrar al-Insan fi Ma'rifa ar-Ruh wa al-Rahman*, Djakarta, Penerbitan Universitas 1961; partly published in transcription in K. Steenbrink, *Itab Suci atau Kertas Toilet*, p. 23-29.

⁷ Ph.S. van Ronkel, *Supplement to the Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts preserved in the Museum of the Batavia Society*, Batavia, Albrecht and Co., 1913, has a representative description of 861 manuscripts; idem, *Catalogus der Maleische Manuscripten te Batavia*, Batavia, Albrecht en Co., 1909; H.H. Juynboll, *Catalogus van de Maleische en Sundaneesche Handschriften*, Leiden, Brill, 1899; Th.G. Pigeaud, *Literature of Java*, 4 vols. The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1967-, to mention just the most important of the catalogues; see further: Ding Choo Ming, "Access to Malay Manuscripts", in *BKI* 143 (1987) 425-451.

⁸ The Malay text has been published with annotations and an English translation by C. Skinner, *Ahmad Rijaluddin's Hikayat Perintah Negeri Bengkulu*, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1982.

⁹ The Malay text of his journey to Mecca in 1854 has been published several times. H.C. Klinkert, *Verhaal van de reis van Abdoellah naar kalantan, en van zijne reis naar Djeddah*, Leiden, Brill, 1889; a (bad) French translation in M.A. Mersier, *Le voyage d'Abdoulhah ben Ab-doelkader de Singapore a Djedday en 1854*, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1903.

¹⁰ The chronicle has been translated by Marsden in 1830 under the title: "Memoirs of a Malayan Family, written by themselves"; a publication of the Malay text with a Dutch translation is found in G.W.J. DREWES, *De Biografie van een Minangkabausen Peperhandelaar in the Lampongs*, 's-Gravenhage, Martinus Nijhoff, 1961.

¹¹ His autobiography has also been published several times. I used R.A. Datoek Besar and R. Roolvink, *Hikajat Abdullah*, Jakarta, Djambatan, 1953. The description of the cathedral of Singapore is on p. 379-403. There is a translation: A.H. Hill, *The Hikayat Abdullah*, Kuala Lumpur, OUP, 1970.

¹² A.L.V.L. van der Linden, *De Europeaan in de Maleische Literatuur*, Meppel, 1937.

¹³ Ann Kumar, *Surapati, Man and Legend*, Leiden, Brill, 1976, p. 300.

¹⁴ One of the Javanese versions has been published and translated by Peter Carey, *Babad Dipanagara*, Kuala Lumpur, MBRAS, 1981.

¹⁵ Javanese text with an Indonesian summary in Mohammad Damami, *Babad Muhammad*, Yogyakarta, Javanologie, 1986.

¹⁶ Only parts of the Centhini have been published until now and small parts only have been translated in Indonesian or Dutch. There are several summaries. See: Pigeaud, *op. cit.*, I, 227-229; Soebardi, "Santri-religious elements as reflected in the Book of Tjentin", *BKI* 127 (1971), 331-349; a Ph.D. thesis, about a related work is Timothy F. Behrend, *The Serat Jatiswara, Structure and Change in a Javanese Poem, 1600-1930*, Ph.D. thesis, ANU, Canberra, 1987.

¹⁷ His work was published in 1913 in the language of Western Java, Sundanese. A Dutch translation is Hadji Hasan Moestapa, *Gewoonten and Gebruiken der Soendanezen*, 's-Gravenhage, Martinus Nijhoff, 1966.

¹⁸ About Islamic education in Indonesia: Mahmud Junus, *Sedjarah Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia*, Jakarta, Pustaka Mahmudiah, 1960; Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1932*, Kuala Lumpur, Oxford University Press; K.A. Steenbrink, *Pesantren, madrasah, Sekolah, Recente Ontwikkelingen in Indonesisch Islamonderricht*, Meppel, Krips Repro, 1974 and the Indonesian translation: *Pesantren, Madrasah, Sekolah, Pendidikan Islam dalam Kurun Moderen*, Jakarta, LP3ES, 1986; B.J. Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia*, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 196-204; Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, Glencoe, The Free Press, 1960, 177-198. For the books used in the traditional schools see also Martin van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning, Books in Arabic Script Used in the Pesantren Milieu; Comments on a New Collection in the KITLV Library", to be published soon in *BKI*.

¹⁹ I use here the 4th ed. Pustaka Sa'adijah, Padang Panjang, somewhere in the 1950's, as Mahmud Junus gives himself the title of *Mustashâr wizârat ash-rhu'ûn ad-diniya* or Advisor to the Minister of Religious Affairs, a position he held in the 1950's; according to the preface the book was written in Sha'ban 1356 or November 1937.

²⁰ Mahmud Junus, *op. cit.* 89-109.

²¹ First edition was published in 1951 at Toko Buku Islamiyah, Medan, 440 pages, 8° in a very small letter; there was a second edition, that I did not see. The first volume of a third edition was published in 1965 at Pustaka Indonesia, Medan, and counted 687 pages in a much larger lettertype. This was an augmented and altered edition. The most striking difference between the two editions is the large number of misprints in the third edition.

²² 3rd edition p. 40.

²³ Dr. Abu Hanifah, *Rintisan Filsafat*; the book has been quoted by several persons, but I myself never saw a copy of it; about this man also: G.A. Ohorella, *Prof. Dr. Abu Hanifah Dt. M.E., Karya dan Pengabdianannya*, Jakarta, Ministry of Education and Culture, 1985; he wrote an autobiography with the title *77 Tahun Riwayat Hidup*, Jakarta 1977.

²⁴ S. Takdir Alisjahbana, *Pembimbing ke filsafat, I. Metafisika*, Jakarta 1946.

²⁵ See the elaborated judgment by Deliar Noer, "Sutan Takdir dan Islam", p. 134-152, in Mochtar Lubis (ed.), *Pelangi, 70 Tahun Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana*, Jakarta, Akademi Jakarta, 1979.

²⁶ His biography was written by Soebagyo In in the first part of the *Festschrift* at his 70th anniversary: Endang Basri Ananda (ed.) *70 Tahun Prof. Dr. H.M. Ras-jidi*, Jakarta, Pelita, 1985.

²⁷ H.M. RASJIDI, *Falsafat Agama*, Jakarta, Pemandangan, 1965.

²⁸ Rasjidi, *op. cit.* 157.

²⁹ Drs. Sidi Gazalba, *Mesdjid, Pusat Ibadat danKebudajaan Islam*, Jakarta, Pustaka Antara, 1962 2nd edition. See about him also Boland, *op. cit.* 191-192.

³⁰ Drs. Sidi Gazalba, *Islam Integrasi Ilmu dan Kebudajaan*, Jakarta, Tintamas, 1967; Idem, *Pengantar Kebudajaan Sebagai Ilmu*, Jakarta, Tintamas, 1961. I am using the 3rd edition of 1968.

³¹ *Kebudajaan Sebagai Ilmu*, 158-161.

³² For a general introduction on islamic education in present Indonesia, see Boland, *op. cit.* 112-123 and Steenbrink, *Pesantren, Madrasah, Sekolah*.

³³ Cfr. the summary by Boland, *op. cit.* 205-211, of the booklet by A. Mukti Ali, *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama*, Yogyakarta, 1965, with many reprints. I have the 5th edition of 1975. A criterium of "scientific" for Boland is that "an evaluation of... religion based on the observer's own religious tenets has to suspended as far as possible."

³⁴ A. Mukti Ali, "Asal-usul Agama", *Al Djami'ah*, 1 (1962) nr. 2, p. 52-56 and nr. 3, p. 8-15.

³⁵ Samuel M. Zwemer, *The Origin of Religion. Based on the Smyth Lectures, Delivered at Columbia Theological Seminary*, London, Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1935.

³⁶ A. Mukti Ali, *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama*, Yogyakarta, Yayasan Nida, 1965 and later (the 4th edition is out of 1975); 47 pages.

³⁷ Boland, *op. cit.*, 206-211.

³⁸ *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama*, p. 8: Persoalan betul atau salah masuk dalam Filsafat Agama.

³⁹ Cfr. Boland, *op. cit.* p. 211.

⁴⁰ A. Mukti Ali, *Bagaimana Menghampiri Isra' Mi'radj Nabi Besar Muhammad saw atau Iman dan Ilmu Pengetahuan*, Yogyakarta, Nida, 1969.

⁴¹ Mukti Ali was born in 1923 as a member of a family with close relations, both to the religious officials (*penghulu*) in the cities as to the leaders of the religious colleges or *pesantren* in the countryside. He received a good secular education in primary and secondary schools, where he learned Dutch, German, French and English. He received his traditional religious education in the *pesantren* of Termas, East-Java. He was a student at McGill in the 1950's under W.C. Smith and wrote there his MA thesis in 1957.

⁴² This was a speech, delivered at a meeting of former members of a Muslim student's organization, December 1962. It was published as a separate booklet in 1970. As an article it was published in Gema, nrs. 32 and 33, 1963.

⁴³ A. Mukti Ali, *Ke-Esaan Tuhan dalam al-Qur'an*, Yogyakarta, Nida, 1969.

⁴⁴ H.A. Mukti Ali, *Agama dan Pembangunan*, Jakarta Departemen Agama, 1976, 121-132.

⁴⁵ "Rencana Strategi Departemen Agama", in: H.A. Mukti Ali, *Agama dan Pembangunan*, Jakarta, Departemen Agama, 1976, p. 21-57.

⁴⁶ *op. cit.*, 92-97.

⁴⁷ *op. cit.*, 129-131.

⁴⁸ H.A. Mukti Ali, *Beberapa Persoalan Agama Dewasa ini*, Jakarta, Rajawali, 1987, esp. 321-337.

⁴⁹ A. Mukti Ali, "Penelitian Agama di Indonesia", in Mylyanto Sumardi (ed.), *Penelitian Agama*, Jakarta, Sinar Harapan, 1982, 20-30.

⁵⁰ H.A. Mukti Ali, *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama di Indonesia*, Yogyakarta, IAIN Sunan Kalijaga Press, 1988.

⁵¹ As mentioned before, this book was twice translated into Indonesian. Both translations were too close to the original text, gave no explanations of technical terms, originating from Christian theology, Hinduism and Buddhism and are full with errors. Therefore the English version is used during the lectures.

⁵² *Op. cit.*, 13-43. Major reference here was the book by B.J. Boland and I. Farjon, *Islam in Indonesia, a Bibliographical Survey*, Leiden KITLV, 1983.

⁵³ *Op. cit.*, p. 65.

⁵⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 74.

⁵⁵ Harith Abdoussalaam, "Studi Agama-agama di Negeri Belanda", *Al Jami'ah*, 22 (1980), 86-90; Idem, "Phenomenologi Agama", in *Al Jami'ah*, 23 (1980), 55-66; Idem, "Ilmu Perbandingan Agama", in *Gema* (Magazine of the Protestant Academy of Theology in Yogyakarta), 29 (May 1985), 51-65.

⁵⁶ Djam'annuri MA and Abdurrahman (ed.), *Agama-agama di Dunia*, Yogyakarta, IAIN Kalijaga Press, 1988.

⁵⁷ Harun Nasution was born in 1919. He went to Egypt for studies at al-Azhar in 1940. In 1952 he received his BA in Social Studies from the American University in Beirut. He was for several years engaged in the diplomatic service, but in the early 1960's he continued his religious studies in Canada, University of McGill in Montreal, where he obtained his MA in 1965.

⁵⁸ Harun Nasution, *Filsafat Agama*, Jakarta, Bulan Bintang, 1973.

⁵⁹ See Moeslim Abdurrahman (ed.), *Agama, Budaya dan Masyarakat*, Jakarta, Litbang Agama, 1980; see also the Journal Dialog, March 1979, where a number of studies on sufism or mysticism have been published.

⁶⁰ Alfian (ed.), *Segi-segi Sosial Budaya Masyarakat Aceh*, Jakarta, LP3ES, 1977 is one of its publications. It is a collection of studies on the socio-cultural aspects of the Province of Aceh.

⁶¹ Literally faith. The 1945 Constitution recognized freedom of "agama dan kepercayaan" or religion and faith.

⁶² The Sumarah Movement, the Pangestu and the Subud or Susila Buddhi Dharma are the best known of these "new religions".

⁶³ H.M. Rasjidi, *Islam dan Kebatinan*, Jakarta, Yayasan Islam Studi Club, ca. 1969.

⁶⁴ Kamil Kartapradja, *Aliran Kebatinan dan Kepercayaan di Indonesia*, Jakarta, Yayasan Masagung, 1985.

⁶⁵ One of the most interesting is the introduction for J. BOELAARS, *Kepribadian Indonesia Modern*, Jakarta, Gramedia, 1984.

⁶⁶ Most of these articles were published in the Magazine Panji Masyarakat.

ON THE REVISION OF SCAPEGOAT TERMINOLOGY

BRADLEY McLEAN

The word *pharmakos* has long been translated by the term 'scapegoat' (G.: *Sündenbock* / Fr.: *Bouc émissaire*) in the study of human expulsion rituals in Athens, the Ionian colonies and elsewhere.¹ The purpose of this article is to describe the problematic nature of this translation and to suggest alternative terminology.

The term '[e]scapegoat' was invented by William Tyndale for his 1530 CE translation of the Bible.² It has since been employed as a technical term in the areas of Biblical, Jewish and Christian studies for the goat which was expelled on the Day of Atonement. In addition to the book of *Leviticus*, there are scapegoat traditions in the book of *Jubilees*, the Qumran Temple Scroll, Philo of Alexandria, numerous targums, the Mishnah, the Sifra, the Talmuds³ not to mention several early Christian sources such as the *Epistle of Barnabas*, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen and Clement of Alexandria.⁴ On account of this complex range of sources, the interpretation of the Levitical scapegoat ritual cannot be distilled to a single essence. One might then ask how such a term can be profitably borrowed for the study of Greek religion.

It is a puzzling fact that this Jewish term has been universally employed for the description of *Greek* expulsion ceremonies. I can find no instance in any book where an author attempts to explain the application of the term 'scapegoat' to non-Jewish rituals. Despite the fact that not one of these Greek rites involves a goat, much less shares any genealogical connection with the Jewish cult, the intended meaning of the term is always taken to be self-evident. Walter Burkert is aware of the degree to which this term has become dissociated from its original meaning:

The common pattern emerging from Hittite, Greek, and Roman ritual and myth is of course a familiar one, that of the 'scapegoat', a term which has become so familiar that some may not even remember that it goes back indeed to a ritual, described in the Old Testament, of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.⁵

The practice of classifying a collective group of rituals by the name of one of that group's constituent members (i.e. the scapegoat ritual) is both confusing and imprecise. This practice presumes common features between the scapegoat ritual and other rituals without specifying them or demonstrating the cogency of such parallels. For example, there is the confusing custom among scholars of designating Oedipus Rex as a 'scapegoat' when they actually mean to say that he resembles a victim of one of the Greek expulsion rituals.⁶ This same point could be made of the application of the term 'scapegoat' to Thracian nummery.⁷

This overgeneralization is further complicated by the fact that the contemporary understanding of what it means to be a 'scapegoat' has many connotations which are contrary to its proper sense. For instance, in the volume of James Frazer's *Golden Bough* entitled *The Scapegoat*, he includes countless instances of irrational mass violence against individuals, from all periods of history, and every imaginable country.⁸ Philip S. Alexander has cautioned that scholarly work must be protected from exactly this sort of "parallelomania". Simply put, "parallelomania" describes the questionable way of picking out and comparing elements from different religious systems without first understanding them in the original systems in which they functioned.⁹ The scapegoat was not a victim of mob feeling, but was carefully selected by a procedure such as the casting of lots (Lev. 16:8). The ritual was not a spontaneous, uncontrolled, irrational act of mass aggression; it was deliberate, disciplined and limited in scope for the achievement of definite end.

The reason for Frazer's careless application of the term "scapegoat" is to be found in his motivation for writing. He did not write to document rituals so much as to make a universal assertion about the nature of all primitive religion. Frazer was trying to advance the theory that all 'primitive' religions are based on magic as opposed to the more advanced forms of religion which are based on ethics.¹⁰ Thus Frazer evaluated the merits of all religious thought according to a Victorian standard of Christian ethical thinking. His peculiar equation of the Levitical scapegoat with victims of mass violence serves his overarching purpose of proving that primitive religions were founded upon what he called 'the myth of the dying and rising god'.¹¹

Mary Douglas has demonstrated that Frazer's dichotomy between magic and ethics is based on anthropological models which have long since been dismissed.¹² Despite the fact that anthropologists are highly critical of Frazer's theoretical model,¹³ the 'parallelomania' which characterized Frazer's use of the term 'scapegoat' continues to the present day. René Girard, in trying to demonstrate the cogency of an anthropological theory, explains *all* primitive religion in terms of the discharging of inter-societal violence based on what he calls 'the scapegoat mechanism'.¹⁴ An exclusive term such as 'scapegoat' ought not to be adopted generically for the comparison of myths, concepts and languages from different contexts and cultural milieux.

In my opinion, greater precision and clarity of thought would result if culturally inclusive terms were adopted. For instance, the term 'scapebeast' was aptly coined by David Jones to describe soldiers sent out to the trenches of the Western front:

But these [soldiers] sit in the wilderness, pent up like lousy rodents all the day long; appointed *scape-beasts*, come to the waste-lands, to grope; to stumble at the margin of familiar things—at the place of separation.¹⁵

Though the allusion is obviously to the Levitical 'scapegoat', his use of such a generic term still evokes the chief characteristics of the general paradigm such as selection, degradation and alienation. Indeed, such an inclusive term as 'scapebeast' is able to encompass many other similar animal expulsion rites besides that of Levitical scapegoat, including steers (Egypt),¹⁶ sheep (Assyria),¹⁷ rams (Hittites),¹⁸ and swine.¹⁹

In the case of Greek ritual, the term *scapebeast* does not lend itself to the application to human beings such as the *pharmakoi*. However, the ancient texts themselves do not suggest an alternative term for this purpose. Though the two most common terms are *φαρμακός*²⁰ and *κάθαρμα*, many other terms are used such as *συβάχχος*,²¹ *περίφημα*,²² *κάθαρσιον*,²³ *καθαρμός*,²⁴ *καθαρισμός*²⁵ and *δημόσιος*.²⁶ Moreover, there are also a number of similar but distinct rituals in places such as Marseille,²⁷ Leukas²⁸ and Chaeronea²⁹ which employ no denominative term, nor do other examples such as the annual expulsion of Old Mars³⁰ and the ritual self-offering of Roman soldiers.³⁰

I suggest that the term 'scapeman' could be adopted to describe the victims of all such rites. This term would diminish the temptation to colour the analysis of Greek ritual by association with the Jewish scapegoat ritual. A case in point is Lewis Farnell's interpretation of the expulsion of the *pharmakoi* on the Thargelia in Athens which seems to be strongly influenced by his prior understanding of the Levitical scapegoat rite. He describes the *pharmakos* as "an abject sin-carrier" and comments:³²

More primitive and more akin to animistic demonology than to religion is the idea that one's sins, like one's diseases might be taken from one's own person and, by certain ritual, planted in some other living being, animal or man, and if this creature by magical or higher ritual could be discharged with all the sins of the community and could be safely put away; here was a literal and almost mechanical expulsion of sin, and there is hardly any need for a high god in the matter.

Though the precise meaning of this civic purification remains in some doubt, it is a fact that the word 'sin' does not occur in any textual source. Though Farnell's analysis may be correct, he offers no explanation or textual support. In light of this, Farnell's interpretation, which narrowly focuses upon the atonement of sin seems to be inferred by analogy with the Jewish scapegoat rite where the concept is dominant.

The use of the term 'scapeman' has several advantages: first of all, it is free of the confused and value oriented connotations which scholars such as Frazer and Girard have attached to the term 'scapegoat'. Secondly a generic term is more suitable for the analysis of tragedy, as in the case of *Oedipus Rex*. Most importantly, it is able to encompass a broad range of human expulsion rituals whereas the term 'scapegoat', properly speaking, applies only to one instance of this shared paradigm. Therefore I suggest that in the interest of the accuracy and clarity of future scholarship, the term 'scapeman' be adopted in place of 'scapegoat'.

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¹ Eg. Wilhelm Mannhardt, 'Mythologische Forschungen' (*Quellen und Forschungen*; Strassburg 1884), 124-138; Lewis R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States* (Oxford 1896-1909), IV 270-284; Jane E. Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (Cambridge 1908), 95-104; Gilbert Murray, *The Rise of the Greek Epic*⁴ (Oxford 1907/1934), 33-35, 227, 326-321; Martin P. Nilsson, *Griechische Feste von religiöser Bedeutung mit Ausschluss der attischen* (Darmstadt 1906), 105-113; Ludwig Deubner, *Attische Feste* (Berlin 1932), 179-188; Viktor Gebhard, *Die Pharmakoi in Ionien und die Sybakchoi in Athen* (Diss. Munich, 1926); James G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*³: IV. *The Scapegoat* (London 1913), 229-273.

² "And Aaron cast lottes over the gootes: one lotte for the Lorde and another for a scape goote" (*Le.* 16:8).

³ The Jewish source are *Le.* 16,7-10.20-22; *Jub.* 34,18-19; 11QTemple col. 25-27; *Ph. Spec.* 1.188; *L.A.* 2,51-52; *Plant.* 60-61; *Her.* 179; a Qumran targum to Leviticus (R. de Vaux and J.T. Milik, *Discoveries in the Judean Desert: Pt. 6, Qumran Grotte 4* [Oxford 1977] II, 156 [Pl. XXVIII], 86-88; Appendix, 92-93); Mishnah *Yoma.* 3,8; 4,1; 6,1-8; 8,8-9; *Shebu.* 1, 6-7; *Men.* 3,6; 9,7; Sifra 60,1,2-3; 181,2,9; 186,2,2-3.5; other targums on Lev. 16 include *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* (Ps.-Jon.), *Targum Onkelos* (Onk.), *Targum Neophyti I*, *Samaritan Targum*.

⁴ The earliest Christian sources are *Ep. Barn.* 7,4-11; *Just. M. Dial.* 40,4; 95,2; *Tert. Adv. Marc.* 7,7-8; *Orig. Homilies on Le.* 10, 1-2; *Clem. A Str.* 7,33.

⁵ Walter Burkert, *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual* (Sather Classical Lectures 47; Berkeley—Los Angeles 1979), 65.

⁶ Eg. J.E. Harrison, *Epilegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (Cambridge 1921), xli, 25; René Girard, *The Scapegoat* trans. Y. Freccero (Baltimore 1986), 89-91; Jean P. Vernant, *Tragedy and Myth in Ancient Greece* (Sussex 1973), 114-131; Burkert (n. 5), 65.

⁷ R.M. Dawkins, *JHS* 26 (1906), 191-206, esp. 203-204.

⁸ J.G. Frazer (n. 1).

⁹ Philip S. Alexander, 'Rabbinic Judaism in the New Testament', *ZNW* 74 (1983), 237-46. Steven Fraade warns of this same danger when he says that pearls should not be "removed too quickly from the medium of their literary shells" (Quoted by Geza Vermes, 'Methodology in the Study of Jewish Literature in the Graeco-Roman Period,' *JJS* 36/2 [1985], 145-158, esp. 145).

¹⁰ Frazer's devaluation of non-ethical religion is apparent in the change of the subtitle of the *Golden Bough*. The original subtitle, 'A Study of Comparative Religion' was changed in the third edition to 'A Study in Magic and Religion'.

¹¹ Frazer discloses the strong prejudice with which he uses this idea of myth in the preface: "The aspect of the subject with which we are here chiefly concerned is the use of the Dying God as a scapegoat to free his worshippers from the troubles of all sorts with which life on earth is beset... When we survey the history of this pathetic fallacy from its crude inception in savagery to its full development in the speculative theology of civilized nations, we cannot but wonder at the singular power which the human mind possesses of transmuting the leaden dross of superstition into a glittering semblance of gold. Certainly in nothing is the alchemy of thought more conspicuous than in the process which has refined the base and foolish custom of the scapegoat into the sublime conception of a God who dies to take away the sins of the world" (J.G. Frazer [n. 1], v).

¹² Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger* (N.Y. 1966), 7-28, 58-72.

¹³ E. Evans-Pritchard, *A History of Anthropological Thought* (N.Y. 1981), 132-152; M. Harris, *The Rise of Anthropological Theory* (N.Y. 1968), 204-208; E. Leach, *Current Anthropology* 7 (1966), 560-567; E.J. Sharpe, *Comparative Religion* (N.Y. 1975),

87-94; J.Z. Smith, *History of Religions* 12 (1973), 342-371; W. Burkert (n. 5), 35-36, 99-122; Douglas (n. 12), 28.

¹⁴ René Girard (n. 6), 39-41; R. Girard, *La Violence et le Sacré* (Paris 1972); R. Girard, *Des choses cachées depuis la fondation du monde* (Paris 1978); R. Girard, *La route antique des hommes pervers* (Paris 1985).

¹⁵ David Jones, *In Parenthesis* (London 1937), 70.

¹⁶ Hdt. 2.39; G. Wilkinson and Alan B. Lloyd comment on the close similarity between this rite and that of the scapegoat (Gardener Wilkinson, *The Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians Including Their Private Life, Government, Laws, Arts, Manufactures, Religion, Agriculture, and Early History* [London ³1847], II, 378; Alan B. Lloyd, *Herodotus. Book 2* [Leiden 1976], II, 178.)

¹⁷ Robert Wm. Rogers, *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament* (N.Y. 1912), 197.

¹⁸ O.R. Gurney, *Some Aspects of Hittite Religion* (Oxford 1977), 47-52.

¹⁹ *Ev. Marc.* 5,1-14; *Ev. Matt.* 8,23-34; *Ev. Luc* 8,26-39.

²⁰ φάρμακος in Ionic (cf. Hippon. Fr. 5-9).

²¹ Hellad. in Phot. *Bibl.* 534a.

²² Phot. *s.v.* περίφημα.

²³ Istros in Harp. *s.v.* φαρμακός; Diegesis on Call. (Fr. 90), 1,31.

²⁴ Hellad. (n. 21); Tz. *H.* 730.

²⁵ Schol. on Ar. *Pl.* 454-455.

²⁶ Schol. on Ar. *Eq.* 1136.

²⁷ Petr. (= frg. 1) in Serv. on Verg. *A.* 3.57.

²⁸ Serv. on Verg. *A.* 3.279; Str. 10.2.9; Ampel. 8.4; Phot. Λευκάτης.

²⁹ Plut. *M.* 693-694.

³⁰ Serv. on Verg. *A.* 7.188.

³¹ Liv. viii 9,3-10,7 (the self-offering of Marcus Valerius to the Latins); x 28,12-29,20 (the self-offering of the consul, Publius Decius [340 BCE] to the Gauls and Samnites).

³² Farnell (n. 1), 280.

A BURNING QUESTION

*Sati and Sati Temples as the Focus of Political Interest*¹

LOURENS P. VAN DEN BOSCH

1. *Introduction*

On the fourth of september 1987 the eighteen year old Roop Kanwar ascended the funeral pile of her deceased husband Maal Singh in the village Deorala (Sikar district) about 60 km north of Jaipur, the capital of the state Rajasthan.² As a good and faithful wife—a *sati*—she followed her twenty-four year old husband who had passed away in the hereafter on account of a fatal gastroenteritis after a hospitalization of a few days. For only eight months had she been married. The cremation of the two beloved took place within six hours after the return of the corpse from the hospital to the village mansion of Roop's father-in-law, the schoolmaster of the village and a respected Rajput landlord. The family of Roop Kanwar was absent at the funeral ceremony and so could not ask her whether she really desired to be burnt with her deceased husband, but the family of Maal Singh later publicly declared that they had tried to persuade his shocked wife to reconsider her decision, but in vain.⁴ In these circumstances the parents of Roop approved her apparent decision to become a *sati* and shared in the triumph of her heroic deed. The family could be proud of a daughter who had immolated herself selflessly and by this deed had elevated the prestige of the family. The cremation was witnessed by a huge crowd, but none of the bystanders felt any obligation to interfere in the funeral rites of Maal Singh, or to snatch his wife from the pyre, because they regarded it as a rare divine event.

The *sati* case in Deorala caused a lot of commotion in the press and a stream of reactions in the rubric: "letters of readers". The media unanimously disapproved of the sad event and regarded it as shameful to India as a civilized nation. The Indian women's rights movement proclaimed that it was murder, organised a protestmarch in Jaipur, and demanded justice.⁵ The police arrested the

fourteen-year old brother-in-law of Roop Kanwar, Pushpindar Singh, because he had lighted the funeral pile of his elder brother and wife. Later on the authorities took Sumer Singh, Roop's father-in-law, and several other relations into custody. Moreover, some other participants of the ceremony were put in jail, among whom were the barber who had carried the fire-pot for the cremation, the carpenter who had constructed the pile and the priest who had performed his sacred duties in the funeral rites. For all that, it was generally regarded by the media as a poor gesture, because the official authorities had not been able to prevent the celebration of this crime by a huge crowd.⁶

Along with these protests many other reactions also could be observed. On the sixteenth of september, twelve days after the cremation, a commemoration ceremony—the *chunari mahotsav*—was organised by relations of the deceased couple.⁷ According to estimations in the papers about fourhundred thousand pilgrims visited Deorala to pay homage to the *mahāsatī* Roop Kanwar. Deorala had become a sacred centre where the divine reality had manifested itself in the self-immolation of a wife who was totally devoted to her husband. In the religious imagination of the devout pilgrims Roop was a goddess who protected her husband by her sacrificial act and realised his well-being in the world to come by virtue of her power (*śakti*), which became manifest in her glorious deed.⁸ For this reason she was honoured with the title *sadā suhāgan*, i.e. 'a wife whose husband lives'. They were convinced that the question of murder was not at stake at all. In this context they regarded the voluntariness of her decision as essential for the realisation of the desired well-being. Roop Kanwar should therefore be regarded as the divine manifestation of the 'truly virtuous wife' who had dedicated her life to her husband, or in other words, as a *satī mātā*.⁹ An event such as this only rarely takes place,¹⁰ but when the power of *sat* descends from heaven a mortal being can endure everything because pain is no longer felt. According to pious conviction, the fire which burnt Roop was not really lit by the hand of man, c.q. the fourteen-year old Pushpindar Singh, but descended directly from the sun.¹¹ The reverse of this religious idea with respect to the power of women is their indirect responsibility for the evil which falls upon their husbands and makes themselves widows.¹²

Soon after the cremation, many stories were spread and Bela, the sister of Maal Singh, told that bystanders had heard that Roop had recited *mantras* when the fire had reached her and that they had seen that her hands spontaneously had assumed the colour of vermillion—*mehndi*—while the form of a *pan*, the symbol of the *satī mātā*, had been engraved in her hand. Furthermore she had from the pyre called on the crowd to invoke the name of God and to have no grief for her. In these stories she came up to the traditional religious stereotypes of *satī*. In fabricated photographs which serve as devotional objects for pilgrims she is represented as seated in her bridal dress on the pyre where she carries the corpse of her husband in her lap.¹³ Many people in Rajasthan—especially those among the traditional warrior caste of Rajputs—clearly disagreed with the official press and the Indian women's rights movement, which regarded Roop as a victim and not so much as a receptacle of divine grace, or a goddess. The clash in the opinions led to demonstration of supporters and opponents in the streets of Jaipur. The anti-*satī* movement brought the case to the High Court of Rajasthan, pointed to the existing legislation against the practice of suttee (i.e. becoming a *satī*) in the Indian Penal Code, and filed a claim against the commemoration ceremonies of this crime. On the fourteenth of september the High Court issued a prohibition, but the devout mass ignored the sentence and proceeded with the ceremonial preparations for the sixteenth of september. On the place of the cremation a temporary pavillion was erected of red and gold-coloured canvas, so that Roop Kanwar would receive a fitting tribute. A gold-embroidered shawl contributed by her parents was carried in procession by her brothers to the sacred place as a token of respect.¹⁴ During the ceremonies young Rajput men with scimitars drew a cordon round the divine shrine to prevent any interference of the police in this sacred affair. As true inheritors of the high ideals of proud Rajput warriors they felt obliged to protect the honour of Roop as a great *satī* (*mahāsatī*). The police remained in the background at this display of pious power and the commemoration ceremonies took place according to ancient customs, notwithstanding the prohibition.

2. *The sacred centre, the media and the politicians*

The events in Deorala led to a heated discussion in the media. In this context one may ask oneself how the message reached the media so fast, because Deorala is an isolated village in the dry Shekhawati region which is characterized by many traditional, centuries-old customs. Moreover, the press did not pay so much attention in the past to other cases of *satī*. According to estimations of the Institute of Oriental Studies in Thane about forty official cases have been recorded by the authorities since India's independence.¹⁵ In this context one of the suspicions is that the press was tipped off by official authorities who had specific interests in distracting the attention to this burdensome topic. Rajasthan and related states had been afflicted in 1986 and 1987 by prolonged periods of drought with several famine-struck regions and the authorities had not been able to distribute adequate food-supplies among the poor.¹⁶ For this reason the government of Rajasthan was in dire straits, needed a red herring and found this in the event of Roop Kanwar's *satī*.¹⁷ But not only the government in Rajasthan, also the national government in Delhi was in hot water on account of the Bofors scandal, in which this Swedish arms-factory, producing howitzers, would have paid illicit commissions to influential politicians and other advisers in the circle of the prime minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. All these rumours, whether right or wrong, show that the *satī* case of Deorala had become a highly politicized topic.

The detailed news in the media mobilized within a short time pro- and anti-*satī* groups who demonstrated in abundance. The advocates and opponents of the so-called practice of suttee pressed each other with questions and arguments in the national press.¹⁸ The advocates of this custom argued that voluntary self-immolation should be regarded as a highly respectable religious deed and, in that capacity, recognized in the Constitution, which guarantees freedom of religion.¹⁹ In this context the *Śankarācārya* of Puri, one of the highest authorities in Hinduism, argued for the acceptance of this custom on the condition that the decision is made voluntarily, for this is a *conditio sine qua non* for this type of sacrifice. The protagonists further held forth that even Rammohun Roy, the

famous social reformer of the nineteenth century,²⁰ was not against voluntary *satī*.²¹ The opponents, among which were especially the Indian women's rights movement, but also other religious leaders,²² argued that in practice a choice for this deed cannot be made voluntarily. According to A. Nandy "it is possible to push a widow to suicide by creating the atmosphere, often without being aware that one is creating such atmosphere. In Roop Kanwar's case, even assuming that no force was used, the family and village did nothing to persuade her to reconsider her headstrong decision".²³ In his opinion, the least thing to be done in the given circumstances was to wait for the arrival of the own family of Roop who was shocked by the death of her husband.

The event in Deorala and the reactions evoked by it in the media induced the politicians to take a clear stand with respect to *satī* and its glorification, though some of them did not shun to play on the religious sentiments of the population in the hope that this would benefit them from an electoral point of view. It is, for instance, conspicuous that Kalyan Singh Kalvi, the leader of the then ruling Janata Party of Rajasthan, visited Deorala at the day of the commemoration ceremonies—the *chunari mahotsav*—to honour Roop Kanwar at her *satī sthāla* (platform raised in honour of the *satī*). He disapproved of the practice, but as he put it: "you cannot play with the people's religious sentiments".²⁴ Many other local and regional politicians were also present at the sacred manifestation in Deorala and they all were of the opinion that it is a rare miracle when the power of *sat(i)* descends upon a wife.²⁵ From this point of view the suggestion seems to be justified that the *satī* case in Deorala was regarded as a divine event in the religious imagination of many pilgrims and for this reason it could not be judged by human standards as laid down in the law. For all that, a great majority of the parliament, with its other social and cultural background, held a different view. The breach of the legal interdiction of the High Court of Rajasthan by many thousands of devout people, as well as the following events, required a more detailed legislation.²⁶ In december 1987 a new bill passed the *Lok Sabhā*,²⁷ "to provide for the more effective prevention of the commission of *satī* and its glorification and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto".²⁸ In part I. par. 2.1 (b) of this bill the glorification in rela-

tion to *satī* is defined. It includes, among other things, “(i) the observance of any ceremony or the taking out of a procession in connection with the commission of *satī*, or (ii) the supporting, justifying or propagating the practice of *satī*, or (iii) the arranging of any function to eulogise the person who has committed *satī*, or (iv) the creation of a trust, or the collection of funds, or the construction of a temple or other structure or the carrying of any form of worship or the performance of any ceremony thereat, with a view to perpetuate the honour of, or to preserve the memory of, a person who committed *satī*”.²⁹ In part III par. 7. (1) of the bill mention is made of the power to remove certain temples or other structures by the proper authorities: “The State Government may, if it is satisfied that in any temple or structure which has been in existence for not less than twenty years,³⁰ any form of worship or the performance of any ceremony is carried on with a view to perpetuate the honour of, or to preserve the memory of any person committing *satī*, by order direct the removal of such temple or other structure”. The act was published in the *Gazette of India* for general information on January 6, 1988 and came into force shortly after publication.³¹

A careful comparison of the official published text of the so-called *Commission of Satī (Prevention) Act* shows some important differences with the text of the act which passed the parliament. These might not be unimportant in the near future.³²

3. *The Sacred Centre as the Object of Political Interest*

With the coming into operation of the *Commission of Satī (Prevention) Act* the government acquired some new instruments in its campaign against the so-called ‘widow-burning’, though it should be added here that the existing legislation already penalized a woman who tried to commit *satī*, as well as each form of abetment or support to this practice.³³ In my opinion the new legislation should therefore especially be seen as a symbolical gesture with which the Indian parliament emphatically dissociated itself from this evil social (c.q. religious) practice and placed itself within the circle of civilized and enlightened nations.³⁴ By this position of the parliament it becomes clear that the practice of the so-called ‘widow-burning’, by which the Indian civilization has been stigmatized

since its colonial contacts with the west up to the present century,³⁵ has been a collective trauma for the modern political élite of India, or to put it differently: 'a burning issue'.

The new Satī (Prevention) Act had far-reaching effects, because it enabled the government, among other things, to close and/or remove those temples and sacred shrines which were erected during the last two decades in commemoration of *satī* goddesses.³⁶ The authorities immediately took action against the raising of funds for the erection of a temple on the place where Roop Kanwar had immolated herself. Moreover, the holy place in Deorala was pegged out, watched by guards and nobody was admitted.³⁷ But not only recently built shrines were the target of political intervention,³⁸ also some other respectable religious institutions were facing bad times.

In this context the attention may be drawn to the Rāṇī Satī temple in Jhunjhunu,³⁹ a provincial town in Rajasthan, about 190 km north of Jaipur, which nowadays has the special interest of the authorities. The temple is owned by the *Śrī Rāṇī Satī Mandir Trust*, the head-office of which is based in Calcutta. Its main office also administers many other Rāṇī Satī shrines all over India.⁴⁰ According to oral tradition the Jhunjhunu shrine would have been erected in the thirteenth century and is connected with the legend of Nārāyaṇī Devī.⁴¹ It relates the vicissitudes of a merchant, a native of Jhunjhunu, who travelled with his fourteen-year old wife, Nārāyaṇī Devī, and his servants through a dark forest in a territory which is nowadays specified as the state Haryana. Suddenly the train was held up by Muslim scoundrels, who were after the commodities. The merchant bravely fought against the raiders, but was killed at last. When his wife saw her dead husband, she was possessed by some divine power, took his sword and defended her honour and that of her husband. She defeated the Muslims and put them to flight by her valour. Subsequently, she ordered the few servants who were left to collect wood and then ascended voluntarily the funeral pyre with her dead husband. The funeral pyre kindled itself and thus she was cremated as a true *satī*.⁴² After this event the servants collected the ashes and took them back to the family of her husband in Jhunjhunu. Shortly after, Nārāyaṇī Devī manifested herself as a powerful goddess to them and ordered them to erect a temple in commemoration of her. After the shrine had been built

in Jhunjhunu many miracles took place in name of the goddess.⁴³

In the legend related above values such as bravery, faithfulness and chastity, especially in relation to women, are expressed, culminating in the act of self-immolation and deification. These values are traditionally supported by the warrior caste in Rajasthan, but here they are connected with a merchant,⁴⁴ which is quite remarkable if one considers the pretended antiquity of the shrine. This antiquity is however doubtful, because the legend is only orally transmitted and does not have any 'scriptural' credentials.⁴⁵ Moreover, the temple in its present form is of a recent date and does not have archeological remains which could point to a high antiquity. The first gate, which gives entrance to a spacious *dharamśālā*, a religious asylum with about three hundred rooms for pilgrims, has been built in 1933.⁴⁶ The other buildings within the temple-compound are of a more recent date. The ancient Nārāyaṇī Devī shrine is replaced by a white marble temple, the construction of which was started at the end of the seventies,⁴⁷ but the work has not yet been completed.⁴⁸ In the side-wall of the entrance gate to the main temple hundreds of institutions and persons are enumerated with the amount of money which they have contributed to this holy place.⁴⁹ Though the central shrine in the *sanc-tum sanctorum* is devoted to Rāṇī Satī,⁵⁰ thirteen other goddesses are also worshipped in small shrines, among whom Sāvitrī and Sarasvatī.⁵¹

A striking feature within the temple-compound is the raised altar for the ancestors⁵² of the Agrawal caste of the Marwari community.⁵³ This rich community of entrepreneurs lives dispersed all over India, but once a year many members gather during a *melā*, a religious union, in the month of september at the *Bhadra Amāvāśya*, the blissful dark moon,⁵⁴ seeking the powerful blessing of the goddess.⁵⁵ During this religious festival the traditional ties are strengthened again.⁵⁶ But the Rāṇī Satī temple in Jhunjhunu is not only popular among the Agrawals, but also among other Marwari castes, who visit the shrine to pay tribute to the goddess. Temple officials explicitly state that the temple is open to all people, irrespective of their religion. This laudible oecumenical outlook, which is promoted by the trustees of the *Śrī Rāṇī Satī Mandir Trust*,⁵⁷ may point to their aspirations to obtain recognition from broad

strata of the population. The ancient hallowed values and institutions which were once especially supported by the royal rulers and the warrior class,⁵⁸ are now promoted as well by new economic dominant groups—rich merchants and captains of industries—belonging to the third estate.⁵⁹ From this point of view it seems to me that the Marwari Agrawal community originating from Jhunjhunu tries to obtain prestige by constituting itself as a protector of values which were once especially connected with the dominant Rajputs and deeply rooted in traditional folk religion. The relation of their ancestral shrine in Jhunjhunu with the legend about the merchant's wife, Nārāyaṇī Devī, who immolated herself as a *satī*, may therefore be regarded as a legitimization of their aspirations. The fact that many Rajasthani politicians have visited the Rāṇī Satī temple in the (recent) past to pay tribute to the mighty goddess shows that the shrine was acknowledged by them as an influential sacred centre, which might serve their political interests as well.⁶⁰

4. *The Sacred Centre as the Focus of Legal Interest*

As mentioned above, the *Commission of Satī (Prevention) Act* enabled the government to interfere in all activities relating to *satī* or glorification of *satī*.⁶¹ On account of this discretion the collector and district-magistrate of Jhunjhunu, Mr. Manohar Singh, “banned the glorification of *satī* in any manner whatsoever all over the district by any individual, group or organisation” at the first of August of that year.⁶² The temple of Rāṇī Satī was closed, the religious ceremonies in honour of Nārāyaṇī Devī were stopped and the preparations for the annual religious meeting (*melā*) on the tenth of September were interrupted.⁶³ The main office of the *Śrī Rāṇī Satī Mandir Trust* in Calcutta immediately took action against this intervention, which contravened the principle of religious freedom as guaranteed in the Constitution. The case was brought to the High Court of Calcutta, which issued an order against the Central Government and that of Rajasthan on the seventeenth of August.⁶⁴ The court upheld the right of the Rāṇī Satī temple at Jhunjhunu to conduct the daily worship and services (*sevā* and *pūjā*) and restored the liberty of citizens to worship the shrine of Rāṇī Satī. Moreover, “the respondents shall not cause any interruption or

harassment to the visitor and devotees ... for daily worship of the deities located inside the temple''. The court was more reserved with respect to the annual public *melā* at Jhunjhunu. It permitted the petitioner to inform its members individually with respect to the holding of the annual general meeting of the society, but permission for a public announcement of the *melā* in the newspapers was reserved. It does not seem improbable that the High Court considered that such a permission would easily lead to a mobilisation of pro-*satī* groups, which would use the *melā* as a possibility to demonstrate for their religious conviction.

After the legal defeat in Calcutta the State of Rajasthan brought the case to the Supreme Court of India in New Delhi for modification.⁶⁵ The *Śrī Rāṇī Satī Mandir Trust* claimed that their temple in Jhunjhunu was not an institution to which the new Satī (Prevention) Act of 1988 had application. Further they maintained that the offering of *pūjā* within the temple did not constitute a glorification of *satī* as defined in the bill and for this reason the District Magistrate was not entitled to exercise powers under the Act to prohibit religious rites within the temple. The counsel of the state of Rajasthan did not accept this interpretation and contended that the *pūjā*, offered within the temple, amounts to a glorification of *satī* and therefore should be regarded as an offence.⁶⁶ According to lawyer Indira Jaising it was necessary to challenge the order of the High Court, because it should be made clear whether the 'prevention' (c.q. the prohibition) of the glorification of *satī* in the Act refers to a particular *satī* or to the concept of *satī*.⁶⁷ The Supreme Court considered that the claim of the State of Rajasthan could not be rejected *prima facie* and took an interim-decision in the matters concerned.⁶⁸ It permitted the continuity of the religious ceremonies within the temple compound without any risk of criminal prosecution against the participants, but it issued a prohibition against the annual *melā* to be held on the tenth of september outside the temple until further orders: "Offering of *pūjā* inside the temple and holding of a *melā* outside are certainly two different aspects and the *melā* may give rise to problems of law and order''. The Supreme Court stipulated that State Authorities are free to regulate the gathering of people who intend to perform *pūjā* within the temple, but the devotees may not be physically obstructed and "no

impediments other than for regulating may be placed by the State Government and its officers in the matter of offering *pūjā* within the temple''. With this interim-judgement the Supreme Court redressed the order of the High Court in several respects. The holding of any *melā* outside the temple was prohibited, but the annual meeting of the Society (i.e. the *Śrī Rāṇī Satī Mandir Trust*) within the temple-compound was permitted, even without objection from the State Government. The whole judgement has a provisional character until principal questions are considered.⁶⁹

The judgement of the Supreme Court was not wholly satisfactory in the eyes of the *All India Democratic Women's Association* and the *Jamadi Mahila Samiti*, because the religious activities in the temple were left undisturbed. One of their points in this context was whether this worship of Nārāyaṇī Devī fell within the definition of religion or that of superstition. In a writ petition⁷⁰ these organisations requested a prohibition of any *chunari mahotsav* (commemoration ceremony) in honour of Nārāyaṇī Devī within the Rāṇī Satī temple of Jhunjhunu, to be effective from the tenth of september—the date of the *Bhadra Amāvāsyā*. Their main motivation was that this ceremony was evidently against the new legislation.⁷¹ Further, they asked for a confiscation of the money collected during the meeting within the temple-compound on that religious festival. The Supreme Court issued an order on the ninth of september in which the petition was suspended until further notice, with the restriction that "the entire collection of money shall be separately accounted for and deposited into a nationalized bank, so that appropriate directions after hearing of both the parties may be made by this Court."⁷²

Though the *Śrī Rāṇī Satī Mandir Trust* and the *Dharma Rakṣa Samiti*, the 'Assembly for the Defense of Religion', have a common interest in their campaign against the new legislation, the leading members of the Agrawal Marwari community carefully dissociate themselves from those Rajputs, who had taken on the government ever since its interference in the *satī* affair of Roop Kanwar. They do not wish to support her self-immolation anyhow, because they regard it as murder. According to them this practice is long extinct among them and their widows are not consigned to a living hell.⁷³ For their women Nārāyaṇī Devī is not a source of inspiration to

commit *satī*, but they do receive solace from this divine lady of mercy. They reject the concept that a woman should end her life with that of her husband. “Do we come into the world together that we should go together?”⁷⁴ The *Dharma Rakṣa Samiti*, however, uses in its fight against the new *Commission of Satī (Prevention) Act*, besides the religious argument of voluntary self-immolation for the well-being of the deceased husband, also a more secular argument. This concerns the right to commit suicide without legal sanctions. It remains, however to be seen how far this modern, but in this context highly artificial, argument will go in the legal battle between the various parties.⁷⁵

5. Concluding Remarks

As may be clear from the preceding, the phenomenon of *satī* and the erection, c.q. reconstruction of *satī* shrines in the recent history of India has produced a discussion on fundamental problems in the political arena of India, of which the end is not yet in sight. The first question is that of the relation between the freedom of religion as guaranteed in the Constitution and the *Commission of Satī (Prevention) Act* of 1988. Within this context the definition of religion is a burning issue. Should the practice of *satī* be regarded as a highly meritorious religious act, in which divine reality expresses itself in a female form, or is it only a social evil and a crime, characteristic of a culture which is dominated by blameworthy ‘macho-values’ presenting themselves disguised in a religious lustre of holiness?⁷⁶

Closely related with the first question is that of the devotional cult in *satī*-temples, such as e.g. at Jhunjhunu. Should they be regarded as religious centres wherein an ideology is propagated, which implicitly invites women to become a *satī* at the death of their husbands and which is also highly oppressive to them. The opponents flatly deny this and argue that ‘wifely virtues’, such as chastity and faithfulness, are celebrated in these shrines and that several other deities are also involved in the cult.⁷⁷ The worship does not incite the burning of widows anyhow.⁷⁸ In this respect this practice is condemned as well by the pro-*satī* groups, but they make an exception for the voluntary self-immolation of a ‘virtuous lady’ who follows her dead husband as a bride to the pyre. This is

regarded by them as a divine epiphany to which human legislation does not apply, but their opponents do not accept this position and regard it as a kind of manipulated 'macho-magic'.

A detailed analysis of the *satī* cases in the last forty years, especially in Rajasthan, doubtless will provide more information about the specific castes and subcastes which are connected with the revival of this highly controversial practice. There are clear indications that especially the Rajputs from the Shekhawati region are involved in it, but the events in Rajasthan show that many other Rajputs felt themselves concerned as well.⁷⁹ A. Nandy declares in this context that "many of the Rajputs protesting the new anti-*satī* legislation are actually resisting the awareness of this triumph of secularism and modernity. They are trying to defend a rite which is, in practice, already outside traditions and is now mainly a part of the modern business culture of religious spectacles".⁸⁰ I doubt whether this explanation is wholly correct, because I have my problems with his opinion on the triumph of secularism and modernity. In my view the performance of *satī* sacrifices should be seen in connection with the apparent need of the participants to identify themselves with the set of ideas, norms and values underlying the ritual. Its enactment supplies the Rajputs concerned again with a clear-cut collective identity, which might have become problematic in the presence of the insecurities of modern life, on account of the withdrawal of many of their traditional prerogatives since independence. The fact that so many of them identify themselves with the cause of the pro-*satī* movement, organised in the *Dharma Rakṣa Samiti* of Omkar Singh Shekhawati shows that the total triumph of secularism and modernity is not yet in sight.

An other important topic in the discussion on *satī* is the question of voluntariness. The pro-*satī* group defends the possibility of self-immolation as a voluntary act and points in this context to soldiers who sacrifice themselves for their country, or to followers of a politician who prefer the life with their beloved leader in the hereafter above this world and who commit suicide for this reason.⁸¹ The opponents argue that it is not possible to speak about a "free will" of women in traditional Hindu society, because they have been taught not to make any decision in their life by themselves.⁸² How can one expect, is their argument, that a wife can make deliberately

such a decision of life-importance in this emotional situation within such a short space of time?⁸³ Moreover, freedom of choice is only possible in a situation where real alternatives are offered which make life worthwhile, but this is hardly the case with a widow who is regarded as highly inauspicious in a society which blames her for the death of her husband and only accepts her as an ascetic who practices austerities in devout memory of her deceased husband. Since remarriage and/or a new life in these circles is out of the question, she only can choose between physical death or social death.⁸⁴

The erection or reconstruction of so many *satī*-temples in recent times is sometimes regarded as an expression of a revival of the traditional religion, which is so highly oppressive to women. For this reason the Indian women's rights movement fights against these sacred centres which incorporate, as it were, the traditional religious values. In their opinion there needs to be a full implementation of the new legislation so that it becomes unmistakably clear that there is no place in a civilized country as India for institutions which promote an inhuman misogynous ideology under the disguise of religion. With this standpoint they make religion subordinate to more general human principles and restrict the freedom of religion. Though one may be in sympathy with this view, one may ask oneself whether the desired goals will be realized with the help of these means. Legislation which is not supported by substantial parts of the population often fails to be effective.⁸⁵

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¹ This paper was read during the symposium 'The Sacred Centre as the Object of Political Interest', held at the University of Groningen from 5-8 march 1989.

² For a survey of the events see e.g. *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, october 4-10, 1987: 20 sqq.

³ For a discussion about the term *satī* see e.g. E. Thompson, *Suttee, A Historical and Philosophical Enquiry into the Hindu Rite of Widow Burning*, London 1928: 15 sqq.; I. Julia Leslie, *Sahagamana in two Dharmasāstra Texts*, Paper delivered at the VIIth World Sanskrit Conference, Leiden august 1987. See further V. N. Datta, *Satī, a historical, social and philosophical enquiry into the Hindu rite of widow-burning*, New Delhi 1988, for a broad historical description of the practice, which is specially focused on the developments in the nineteenth century.

⁴ See e.g. *The Indian Post*, december 15, 1988: 5: "Roop committed *satī* of her own free will".

⁵ Cf. A. Nandy, 'The Human Factor', in: *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, january 17-23, 1988: 20 sqq. Cf. also A. Nandy, 'The Sociology of Satī', in: *The Indian Express*, november 5, 1987; V. Dhagamwar, 'Saint, victim and criminal', in: *Seminar* 342 (february 1988), pp. 34-39.

⁶ See *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, october 4-10, 1987: 20 sqq.

⁷ This *chunari mahotsav* is comparable with the usual commemoration rites of the deceased after twelve days; cf. e.g. M. Monier Williams, *Brahmanism and Hinduism*, London 1891: 293 sqq.

⁸ See D. Jacobson, 'The Chaste Wife', in: S. Vatuk (ed.), *American Studies in the Anthropology of India*, Delhi 1978; A. Sharma, *Satī: Historical and Phenomenological Essays*, Delhi 1988; C. Weinberger-Thomas, 'Cendres d'immortalité, La crémation des veuves en Inde', in: *Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions*, 1989, 67/1 (janvier-mars), pp. 1 ff.

⁹ The expression is also used for a loving mother who ascends the funeral pile of her unmarried son.

¹⁰ According to representatives of the anti-satī movement fourty widows would have been burnt as *satīs* since India's independence in the region of Shekhawati alone. For the discussion on pain see R. S. Rajan, 'The Subject of Sati: Pain and Death in the Contemporary Discourse on Sati', in: *Yale Journal of Criticism* 3, no 2 (1990), pp. 1-27.

¹¹ Cf. *The Indian Express*, *Express Magazine*, january 10, 1988: 1 and 6.

¹² The widow is often held responsible for the death of her husband on account of her bad *karma*. She is regarded as inauspicious and is shunned; cf. e.g. M. Winternitz, *Die Frau in den indischen Religionen*, Leipzig 1920: 86 sqq. See also D. Stein, 'Burning Widows, Burning Brides: The Perils of Daughterhood in India', in: *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 61, 3 (Fall), 1988, esp. p. 468.

¹³ See A. Nandy, 1988 (note 5), 21 with an example of a photograph.

¹⁴ K. Sawhny, 'Sati, Death of an Indian Widow', in: *The Jerusalem Post*, january 26, 1988: 6.

¹⁵ Verbal information by members of the Institute of Oriental Studies at Thane, who collect all material about *satī* under the direction of Dr. V. V. Bedekar. For an analysis of the situation in the Shekhawati region see S. Vaid, 'Politics of Widow Immolation', in: *Seminar* (monthly symposium), nr. 342, Delhi 1988 (february), pp. 19-23; See also K. Sangari, 'Perpetuating the myth', in: *Seminar* 342, pp. 24-30.

¹⁶ The chief minister at that time was Mr. H. Joshi, but he has been replaced by his rival Mr. S. Mathur, who belongs to the Congress I.

¹⁷ The Rajput (warrior) caste is especially connected with the practice of *satī*. It forms from olden times the influential conservative apex of the social pyramid in Rajasthan.

¹⁸ The anglo-indian term 'suttee' is derived from the sanscrit word *satī*, i.e. a truly virtuous woman (who follows her deceased husband in the world to come). In the sanscrit literature usually other expressions are used for this custom such as *sahagmana* ('going together'), *anugamana* ('going after'), *sahamaraṇa* ('dying together') and *anumaraṇa* ('dying after'); see A. Sharma, *Satī: Historical and Phenomenological Essays*, Delhi 1988: 86 note 10.

¹⁹ Members of these pro-satī groups in Rajasthan have organized themselves in an organisation called: *Dharma Rakṣa Samiti*: 'Assembly for the Defense of the Religion', which is sometimes also called *Satī Dharma Rakṣa Samiti*. Most of the members belong to the Rajput caste.

²⁰ Rammohun Roy (or Ray) published two pamphlets and a book on the subject. The first polemical tract was called *Sahamaran Vishaye Pravartaker O Nibartaker Sambad* (A Conference between an Advocate for and an Opponent of the Practice of Burning Widows Alive), november 1818. The second pamphlet was published in 1820 under the title *Sahamaranwar Vishaye Pravartak Dvitiya* (A Second Conference between an Advocate for and an Opponent of the Practice of Burning Widows Alive); see V. N. Datta, o.c. (note 2), pp. 119 sqq. The book focused especially on inheritance problems and was published in Calcutta in 1822 under the title: *Brief Remarks regarding Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females according to the Hindoo Law of Inheritance*. See further B. B. Roy, *Socioeconomic Impact of Sati in Bengal and the Role of Raja Rammohun Roy*, Calcutta 1987. For a psychological explanation of the position of Rammohun Roy with respect to the question of *sati* see Ashis Nandy, 'A Nineteenth-Century Tale of Women', Violence and Protest, in: A. Nandy, *At the Edge of Psychology, Essays in Politics and Culture*, Delhi 1980: 1-31, esp. 11 sqq.

²¹ See *The Indian Post*, february 29, 1988: 3 ('Rammohun was not against voluntary sati'); *The Indian Express*, february 29, 1988: 13 ('How Rammohun Roy fought against sati'). The author of the *The Indian Express* quotes a book of N. Dhar, *Vedanta and the Bengal Renaissance*, Calcutta 1977: 'Rammohun was ready to allow sati specially when it was voluntary, though his inference was that, as a rule, sati was not voluntary, but manipulated'. The whole discussion on this topic should be seen against the background of the discussions on the new Sati (Prevention) bill, Bill No. 133 of 1987, which was published in the *The Indian Gazette*, january 6, 1988. In the statement of objects and reasons to this bill Raja Ram Mohan Ray is explicitly mentioned as one of the great opponents against the practice of the so-called 'widow-burning'.

²² See e.g. *The Times of India*, december 31, 1987: 5 describing the protest-march to Deorala of Swāmi Agnivesh of the Ārya Samāj and his followers against pro-*sati* groups. A planned scriptural debate between the Swāmi and the Śankarācārya was prohibited as a potential violation of the regulations against the glorification of *sati*: cf. D. Stein, o.c. (note 12), 473 note 18. See also K. Sangari, 'There Is No Such Thing as Voluntary Sati', in: *The Times of India, Sunday Review*, octobre 25, 1987.

²³ See A. Nandy, 'The Human Factor', in: *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, january 17-23, 1988: 21. However, the father-in-law of Roop, Sumer Singh Shekhawati, who was first charged with abetment of suicide, but later with murder, claims that he tried to persuade Roop not to commit *sati* because it was asking for troubles for the family; cf. *The Indian Post*, december 15, 1988. See also S. Vaid, Politics of Widow Immolation, in: *Seminar*, no 342, 1988: 20-23.

²⁴ See *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, october 4-10, 1987: 22. See also the interview of Inderjit Badhwar with Kalyan Singh Kalvi, in: *India Today*, october 31, 1987, p. 41.

²⁵ *ibidem*.

²⁶ See the *Statement of Objects and Reasons to the Commission of Sati (Prevention) Bill*, Bill No. 133 of 1987: 9.

²⁷ The Indian parliament.

²⁸ *The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Bill*, Bill No 133, december 1987.

²⁹ *ibidem*, p. 2.

³⁰ The meaning of this passage is not very clear to me, because it is suggested that temples less than twenty years do not fall under this heading.

³¹ *The Gazette of India*, January 6, 1988, Registered no. D (DN). 127. For the coming into force see part I, 1 (3).

³² In part III par. 7 (1) of the official published text a significant modification can be noted, because instead of a "person committing *satī*", mention is made of "any person in respect of whom *satī* had been committed", and the same expression is also used in par. 7 (2). The essential difference between the two versions is that the official text forbids the glorification of the husband in dedication to whom his wife immolated herself on his funeral pile, but in the sacred tradition this husband is not eulogized or glorified by means of the erection of temples, ceremonies etc. The focus of devotion is directed upon the *satī* herself, who is regarded as a goddess, or to quote the words of I. Julia Leslie, *Sahagamana in two Dharmasāstra Texts* (unpublished paper, cf. note 2), 1987: 1-2. "As a *satī* ... the widow ceased to be a woman at all: she became a goddess, endowed with stupendous powers to bring salvation to generations of her family, regardless of their actual behaviour in the world".

³³ Cf. *The Statement of Objects and Reasons added to Bill*. no. 133 of 1987: 9, in which reference is made of the Rajasthan *Satī* (Prevention) Act 1987, the Bengal *Satī* Regulation 1829 (Bengal Regulation XVII) and the Tamil Nadu *Satī* Regulation, 1830 (Tamil Nadu Regulation I of 1830). The references in the Statement are not very accurate, because Tamil Nadu did not exist as a state in 1830.

³⁴ Opponents of the new legislation point to the double dealing of Indian politicians. When the prime minister of Tamil Nadu, the former filmstar Mr. G. M. Ramachandran, died on December 24, 1987 three of his political supporters followed their beloved master voluntarily in the hereafter. Though suicide is a punishable act according to the Indian Penal Code, the government of Tamil Nadu decided to benefit the relations with an amount of money; cf. *India Today*, January 15, 1988: 24 sqq. for a report on his death. The national press made mention of the suicides and the benefits after the funeral ceremonies.

³⁵ For a short survey of the most important itineraries of ancient travellers see R. Garbe, *Beiträge zur indischen Kulturgeschichte*, chapter 4 'Die Witwenbrennung', Berlin 1903: 143-182. See also Lata Mani, 'Production of an Official Discourse on *Satī* in Early Nineteenth Century Bengal', in: *Indian Economic and Political Weekly*, April 1986: 32-40.

³⁶ As mentioned before, the formulation of the text of par. 7 of the bill is rather crippled; instead of not less than twenty years the intention seems to be less than twenty years. If my supposition is correct it implies that the proper authorities can remove recently built (not older than twenty years) temples and other structures in which a glorification of *satī* is expressed.

³⁷ According to R. Manchanda, 'Deorala, Waiting with Bated Breath', in: *The Indian Post*, August 28, 1988: 7 the pilgrimage to Deorala was not really stopped and even members of the Rajasthan Armed Constabulary, who were sent to prevent any glorification, would have accepted the *prasād* at the *satī sthāla*, but during my visit in January 1989 the place was inaccessible and no pilgrims were present at the sacred place.

³⁸ Cf. *The Express Magazine* (Sunday edition), January 10, 1988: 1. In the district Banda (Uttara Pradesh) six *satī* temples and *chabutras* are located, three of them in commemoration of recent *satī* events, but also in other districts such as e.g. Bulandshahr, Mughal Sarai, Banaras and Kanpur, recent temples are built to eulogize the practice of *satī*. The same magazine also makes mention of this type of temples in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bombay.

³⁹ Cf. The *Express Magazine*, January 10, 1988: 6: "Jhunjhunu, in fact, is known for two landmarks: one, its Marwari entrepreneurs who have migrated to other parts of the country to richly contribute to the national wealth, and the other is the Rāṇī Satī temple". (art. Pusp Saraf).

⁴⁰ According to the secretary of the trust, Mr. Devendra Jhunjhuwala, there are 111 temples in the country, and at least 20 of them are in Rajasthan. Moreover, Rāṇī Satī temples are built in Rangoon and Bangkok; see the *Express Magazine*, January 10, 1988: 6. According to information of the temple authorities in Jhunjhunu, also Rāṇī Satī shrines would have been erected in Singapore, Japan and the United States.

⁴¹ Some temple informants give a very precise date, viz. 1292, but often it is said that the original shrine was about seven hundred years old. According to other information it would have been in existence for about four hundred years.

⁴² For scattered references see also the *Express Magazine*, January 10, 1988: 6.

⁴³ My informants gave two explanations of the name Rāṇī Satī. The first one is that Nārāyaṇī Devī should be regarded as the queen (*rāṇī*) of the *satīs*, but according to another explanation the father of Nārāyaṇī Devī gave her the pet-name Rāṇī, because she was like a queen to him.

⁴⁴ Though Nārāyaṇī Devī symbolises by her faithfulness to her husband the concept of *satī* there is a great difference between her and the Rajput *satīs*. She behaved like a warrior and not like a helpless maiden.

⁴⁵ The *Imperial Gazetteer* of 1908 does not make mention of a Rāṇī Satī temple in Jhunjhunu, but this does not prove that a small shrine was not in existence at that time. It indicates that such a shrine may not have been known very well, and that it was not conspicuous. Generally it is recognized by the devotees that it was only a small structure. It may have functioned only in the tradition of a small group, the Marwari Agrawals from Jhunjhunu, who became more prominent in the course of this century.

⁴⁶ At the entrance it is mentioned in Hindi: This gate has been built by Bombay citizen Seth Candraya Jhunjhunwala in *vikram samvat* 1991 (= 1933).

⁴⁷ The *Anandadvāra* was built in 1978. In its present form the shrine is the richest Satī temple in the country, resplendent in carved marble, a 100 Kw power station of its own, a self-managed water supply system and many other facilities.

⁴⁸ I visited the temple in January 1989.

⁴⁹ A careful analysis of these donors gives us insight in the group of supporters and their economical background.

⁵⁰ She is represented by a *triśūla*, a trident, with two eyes between the prongs.

⁵¹ These thirteen goddesses are sometimes regarded as spinsters according to my informants. Besides, some of the traditional Hindu gods, such as Hanuman and Śiva, are worshipped in separate temples within the sacred compound.

⁵² For a combination of *satī* and the ancestors see W. Crooke, *The Popular Religion and Folklore of North India*, vol. I, Delhi 1968 (repr. of the second ed. of 1896): 187-188: "In many places the Satī represents the company of the venerated ancestors and is regarded as the guardian mother of the village ... The Satī having thus secured the honour of deification, is able to protect her worshippers and gratify their desires."

⁵³ Marwar is one of the principalities of Rajasthan with Jodhpur as capital. In the course of time Agrawal entrepreneurs emigrated to many other regions and cities. In Bombay and Calcutta they form a rich group with influential political connections. Especially the Agrawalas from Jhunjhunu belonging to the Bansal

gotra regard Nārāyaṇī Devī as their *kuladevī* (clangoddess), though she is regarded by many other Agrawals as their principal tutelary deity: cf. J. Punwani, 'Jhunjhunu, There is a Difference', in: *The Indian Post*, august 28, 1988: 7-8.

⁵⁴ The auspicious night of the new moon, when sun and moon 'dwell together'. Sun and moon are frequent iconographical emblems on many *satī* stones; cf. S. Settari and G. D. Sontheimer (eds.), *Memorial Stones, A Study of their Origin, Significance and Variety*, Dharwad/Heidelberg 1982, fig. 2 (art. J. Jain) fig. 4, 6, 8, 9, 13 (art. G. D. Sontheimer), etc. The images of sun and moon on either side are emblematical of never-dying fame.

⁵⁵ Also children between two and three years are brought to the temple for the ritual tonsure (*caula*). It is believed that the goddess fulfils the desires of her followers and protects them.

⁵⁶ In Bombay religious festivals are held at the same time (*Amāvāsyā* of *Bhādrapada*, i.e. august/september) in the Rāṇī Satī temples near the Navatiya street, Malad (east) and at the Amarsi Road, Malad (west). According to my informants, both temples are supposed to have been in existence for about fifty years. An ancient stone of the original Rāṇī Satī shrine of Jhunjhunu has been bricked in these temples to symbolize the connections with the 'mother shrine'; cf. also the *The Express Magazine*, january 10, 1988: 1 (which mentions the same procedure for the construction of Rāṇī Satī temples in Kanpur). Rāṇī Satī is symbolized by the same sacred object, a *trisūla* with eyes. Between four and six thousand persons, mostly belonging to the Marwari mercantile community participate in the religious activities. Whereas the temple in Jhunjhunu functions on a national level, the other ones have a more regional or local function.

⁵⁷ Its board consists of seven Agrawal trustees, who are responsible for all shrines and charities—dispensaries, primary and secondary schools, etc.—belonging to the Śrī Rāṇī Satī Mandir Trust. Besides, many private Rāṇī Satī temples exist belonging to individual Agrawals originating from Jhunjhunu; cf. *The Express Magazine*, january 10, 1988: 1 and 6.

⁵⁸ The Rajputs never constituted more than about 10% of the population of Rajasthan, but for more than a millennium they were the most influential group. During the British colonial time they were pacified. Since the independence of India they gradually lost their special privileges and prerogatives, culminating in the dramatic abolition in 1970 by Indira Gandhi of the privy purses of the ex-rulers.

⁵⁹ The Birla family, belonging to the Marwari Maheshwari caste, is an other important group which seeks to acquire religious prestige by building impressive marble Hindu temples in, among others, Hyderabad (A.P.), the centre of the islamic culture in the south of India, and Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan. In the last mentioned temple mr. Birla and his wife are represented by marble statues outside the temple as devout Hindus who pay tribute to the cult-statues in the central shrine.

⁶⁰ A careful reading of the notions in the visitors' book will doubtless yield new information about their impressions; so e.g. the progressive judge Gumandhal Lodha, who celebrated the holiness of the place. According to my informants, some of them were deeply moved by the spirituality of the place where so many miracles had taken place. According to one tradition a son of a former prime-minister once visited the place, but was accidentally killed in the *dharamśālā* by an electric shock. The doctors established his death and he was brought by his afflicted relations to the shrine of Rāṇī Satī who restored the boy to life again by

her divine power. See also R. Manchanda, 'Deorala, Waiting with Bated Breath', in: *The Indian Post*, august 28, 1988: 7 who mentions the recent visit of several politicians, among the former governor of the Rajasthan, Vasantdada Patil, the *Lok Sabha* speaker Balram Jakhar, and the external Affairs Minister for State, Natar Singh.

⁶¹ Cf. *The Gazette of India*, january 6, 1988: The Commission of Satī (Prevention) Act, part III, par. 6 (1) and (2).

⁶² Cf. *The Statesman*, august 22, 1988: 9; *The Hindu*, august 22, 1988: 7; *The Decan Herald*, august 22, 1988: 7.

⁶³ The annual *melā* on *Bhadra Amāvāsya* (cf. note 56) would fall that year on the 10th of september.

⁶⁴ The order was given by the High Court judges, mr. A. K. Sengupta and mr. K. M. Yusuf, and published at the 18th of august.

⁶⁵ *Special Leave Petition* (civil) no. 9922 of 1988 in the Supreme Court of India, Civil Appellate Jurisdiction.

⁶⁶ See the *special Leave Petition* (preceding note), p. 2.

⁶⁷ See J. Punwani, Jhunjhunu, 'There is a Difference', in: *The Indian Post*, august 28, 1988: 7 quoting Indira Jaising: "It is not enough to prevent *satī* from taking place, or to prevent the worship of particular women like Roop Kanwar, one must include even a deity which depicts the concept of *satī*, i.e. a woman who murders herself, and is therefore considered a pious woman".

⁶⁸ The interim-judgement is dated september 1, 1988.

⁶⁹ Cf. *The Indian Post*, (Bombay Edition), september 3, 1988, editorial: "A Balanced Judgement".

⁷⁰ *Writ Petition Supreme Court of India*, No 913 of 1988.

⁷¹ That preparations for a *chunari* ceremony were made, is supported by an affidavit given by a certain Vijay Trivedi.

⁷² Supreme Court of India (court no 5), *Record of Proceedings*, item no 14, d.d. 9-9-1988.

⁷³ Cf. J. Punwani, o.c. (note 67), p. 7.

⁷⁴ *ibidem*.

⁷⁵ The commitment of suicide is unanimously condemned by all authors on *dharma*, but during the medieval legal discussion on *satī* (which is usually called *anumaraṇa*; see note 18) *Vijñānaneśvara* does not subsume this practice under the heading of suicide (*ātmatyāga*) in opposition to *Medāthiti* in his *Mitākṣarā*, but under that of a ritually approved act of voluntary self-immolation, to which the Vedic injunctions have no application. Cf. also A. S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization*, Delhi 1956: 123 sqq.

⁷⁶ The question whether the custom should be regarded as religious depends upon the definition of religion within this context. Pro-*satī* groups, e.g. the *Dharma Rakṣa Samiti*, often refer to the religion of their ancestors, which is orally transmitted, but they also appeal to respectable medieval religious texts. The anti-*satī* groups contend the legitimacy of this argument, since the ancient authoritative religious 'scriptures' do not approve the custom. With this point of view the anti-*satī* groups introduce a normative element in the discussion, which dates from the beginning of the nineteenth century and comes out of the head of christian missionaries, but religion cannot be adequately defined by referring to these texts. In a state where the literacy rate nowadays is about 24%, oral traditions are at least as vital to the folk-religion as the scriptural sources.

⁷⁷ Argument of the counsel of the Śrī Rānī Satī Mandir Trust in the Supreme Court: cf. *The Indian Post*, september 3, 1988.

⁷⁸ Sometimes comparisons are made with the thousands of statues of Mahātmā Gandhi which are spread all over the country. Though these statues point to his noble ideals, they obviously have not invited mankind in India to practice them.

⁷⁹ The pilgrimage of more than 400.000 people to Deorala during the first month cannot be explained as just an affair of the Shekhawati Rajputs.

⁸⁰ A. Nandy, o.c. (note 5): 23.

⁸¹ See note 34.

⁸² In the traditional ideology a wife is always defined in terms of the man to whom she belongs. She has no identity of her own; cf. also L. P. van den Bosch, 'Some Reflections on the Concept of Person in Ancient Indian Texts', in: H. G. Kippenberg a.o., (eds.), *Concepts of Person in Western and non-Western Religion*, The Hague 1990: 229-276.

⁸³ According to the anti-*satī* group it is observed that in the great majority of the cases of 'widow-burning' the family of the wife concerned was absent during her decision and the following cremation ceremony.

⁸⁴ For the position of the widow see also e.g. A. S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Society*, Delhi 1956 (second edition): 135-196.

⁸⁵ For the Indian civilisation many examples can be easily found, such as for instance the caste system and the dowry with the many evils connected with it.

CHURCH LANGUAGE AND VERNACULAR LANGUAGE IN CENTRAL ASIAN BUDDHISM*

JAN NATTIER

The history of Buddhism in Central Asia—a term that I will use here to refer to the network of oasis towns comprising the ancient “Silk Road” stretching from Eastern Iran to Tun-huang¹—is a major missing piece in our knowledge of the evolution of the Buddhist tradition. Yet the scholar who attempts to compile a connected history of Central Asian Buddhism finds again and again that there is simply not enough data to reconstruct the total picture of events in this region. At times it is tempting to abandon the project altogether, appealing to the words of the great Indologist John Brough, who declared that a narrative history of the expansion of Buddhism across Central Asia simply cannot be written. As he wrote in 1965, “the surviving information is fragmentary, interpretation is often uncertain, the problems numerous and intractable.”² Certainly Brough was right in pointing out that we will probably never have all the pieces of the puzzle: Too much of the data has been lost—or perhaps never existed at all in written or iconographic form—for us to be able to put together a complete account of the diffusion and evolution of Buddhism in Central Asia.

But if we are willing to abandon the analogy of the puzzle, and think instead of our task as one of organizing the existing data into something resembling an open-weave net, the project becomes at once less daunting. Put another way, if we admit at the outset that the area occupied by the gaps in our knowledge may always be far greater than that occupied by what we *do* know, then we can forge ahead—with, of course, all due caution—in the task of organizing those small bits of data that are available into a preliminary framework. Once this has been accomplished, new perspectives may emerge even from materials that have already been examined by modern scholars, and we may also find clues for where to look for more information in the sources from adjacent regions. As the connecting link between India and China during those vital first

centuries of the expansion of Buddhism across the Asian continent, Central Asia holds a place of unparalleled importance in the history of the Buddhist religion. The value of what we may be able to learn from the admittedly fragmentary data from this region is sufficient to justify, I believe, a preliminary attempt to put the pieces into order. Specially, I would like to focus here on one of the overarching issues in the history of Buddhism in this region: the use of a special “church language,” on the one hand, and vernacular languages on the other.

Church Language and Vernacular Language: Methodological Considerations

We must begin with the problem of definition. First, what is meant by “church language” (or “religious language”) in general? Second, can we identify anything that corresponds to this category in the Buddhist context? And third, does such a thing exist in the more narrowly defined context of Buddhism in Central Asia?

Beginning with the first of these issues, we may adopt the useful system of analysis suggested recently by Richard N. Frye,³ who on the basis of his research in the Iranian cultural sphere has pointed out the existence of four distinct language categories:

1. “*religious*” or “*church*” *language*: a language distinct from the spoken vernacular and restricted to liturgical, scriptural, or other religious use.
2. *written administrative language*: the language used for written record-keeping in business and government. This may be simply a more formalized version of the everyday spoken language, or it may be a different language altogether (as in the case of the administrative use of Aramaic in the Achaemenid empire of Persia).
3. *spoken administrative language*: the language used for oral communication in government and business dealings. Again this may simply be a somewhat elevated version of the ordinary spoken vernacular, or it may be a separate language. In a multilingual empire the spoken administrative language (like its written counterpart) is often a *lingua franca* stretching across a number of linguistic boundaries.
4. *vernacular language*: the local dialect, spoken at home and in informal work and social situations.

In some cases, of course, these categories may overlap; in the extreme case (as in the United States, where English is generally

employed in all four capacities) a single language may be used for all four purposes, with a mere shading in tone marking the transition from the more formal expressions used in religious and official contexts to the more colloquial expressions overheard at the neighborhood bar. At the opposite extreme, as many as four distinct languages—which may even belong to four separate language families—could, at least theoretically, be used. The number of languages employed depends on a variety of factors, including the cultural influences to which the area in question has been subjected, its political dependence or independence with respect to neighboring states, and its own internal linguistic composition (that is, whether it is a multilingual society, a monolingual society, or a society incorporating speakers of a variety of closely related dialects). Since we will be most concerned in this paper with the first and last of these four categories, we may begin with a closer examination of the first.

The term “church language,” or religious language, can be used in a number of senses. It can refer, first of all, to scriptural language—that is, the language of texts considered by transmitters to be sacred, whether these texts are written or oral in form. Second, the term can refer to ritual language—language used in religious rituals and ceremonies, but not elsewhere in everyday life. And third, it can refer to the language of individual words or phrases of special religious significance which are embedded in a text written in another language—for example, the Indian Buddhist mantra *gate gate pāragate pārasaṃgate bodhi svāhā* (an expression preserved in the original Sanskrit even when the text in which it appears, the *Heart Sūtra*, is translated into languages such as Chinese, Tibetan, or Mongolian), or the Greek phrase *kyrie eleison* embedded within the Latin mass. In the latter case we have the curious (though hardly isolated) case of a phrase in one church language embedded within a larger text composed in another. Of these various types of “church language,” our major concern in this paper will be with the first—that is, a special religious language in which sacred scriptures (whether oral or written) are transmitted. We may begin, therefore, by considering just how such a distinctive language comes into being.

In the history of religions the phenomenon of “church language”

is encountered most often in the form of a language in which a divine revelation has been received.⁴ The language of this original revelation, of course, is itself ordinarily a vernacular; presumably a divine message issued in a language the recipients could not understand would be of little use. As the faithful seek to maintain this message over the ensuing centuries, however, the language in which the revelation was originally encoded becomes increasingly distant from the continually evolving language of everyday speech. Finally—if the revelation is maintained over a sufficient period of time, or if the evolution of the spoken language proceeds rapidly enough—the language of the revelation can become nearly incomprehensible even to those who are charged with preserving it. At this point the language in which the divine message is recorded has entered the category of a pure “church language,” clearly separate from the spoken vernacular and restricted in its use to the reading or recitation of the sacred message. At this stage the “church language”—even if it is still understood by religious professionals who have undertaken special training—is virtually inaccessible to the masses of religious adherents.

The problem of incomprehensibility is exacerbated if—as in the Buddhist case—the religious tradition in question is exported beyond its original linguistic boundaries. Now the problem is no longer merely one of archaism, but of partial or total discontinuity between the language of revelation and the language of ordinary speech.

Once such linguistic estrangement—whether due to chronological or to geographical distance from the locus of the original revelation—has taken place, the adherents of the religious tradition in question are faced with a dilemma. Should the revelation be preserved as it is, or should the sounds be changed and the meaning translated into a new (and more vernacular) language? In other words, what is the relative importance of form, on the one hand, and of content on the other? For the believer who takes seriously the divine source of the original revelation, the answer to this question is not all straightforward. For if the message is taken out of the form in which a divine power originally revealed it and cast in another language (with all the attendant possibilities of misinterpretation), who is to say that human error has not crept in to alter

the message? In some religious traditions the result of such translation is no longer accorded the same status as the original revealed message. Thus the *Qurʿān* is viewed by Muslims as the revelation given by God to Muhammad *in Arabic*; a translation of the Arabic text into any other language is not that revelation itself, but only a human interpretation of its message.⁵ Likewise the authority of the Vedic literature of India is inextricably linked to the sounds themselves, as “heard” by ancient sages millennia ago. To mispronounce these sounds—much less to translate them into an altogether different language—is to empty them of their inherent power.⁶ Hence the cultivation of the correct memorization and transmission of these texts by the custodians of the Vedic tradition, who handed down these texts orally in an ancient form of Sanskrit (much to the amazement, and deep gratitude, of modern Indo-European linguists) for nearly two millennia before they were finally recorded in writing.

“Church Language” in the Buddhist Context

The fact that the Buddhist tradition has so often served as a stumbling block for generalizations about religion—whether for its alleged atheism or for its rejection of the notion of an eternal individual soul—should alert us to the possibility that a given religious category, even one that seems universal in other religious traditions, may well turn out to be absent from the Buddhist repertoire. We should not assume at the outset, therefore, that “church language” in the sense just described will necessarily appear in the Buddhist tradition. Before turning to the Buddhist materials from Central Asia it is worth pausing first to examine the resources for thinking about language that were present already in the Indian Buddhist tradition, and the extent to which these theoretical principles were actually followed in practice.

First of all, our initial definition of “church language” as a language in which a specific divine revelation has been encoded serves to highlight an aspect of the Buddhist tradition that is often overlooked: the fact that the idea of a “revelation” from an otherworldly source is problematic in the early years of that tradition, and indeed remains so throughout much of Buddhist history.

Unlike the *Qurʿān* or the Vedic literature of India, the Buddhist scriptures purport to be nothing other than the pronouncements of a historical person, the Buddha Śākyamuni, made at a number of locations in northeast India in response to a variety of specific circumstances. Indeed one could contend (without being overly facetious) that Buddhism is a “one-genre” religion: Virtually every text in the Buddhist canon begins with the introductory phrase “Thus have I heard at one time”—an expression that serves precisely to ground the text in the ordinary world of everyday experience.⁷ Granted, the Buddha’s wisdom and experience are ranked far above those of his ordinary followers, and such a valuation naturally lends an unusual weight of authority to his words. Nonetheless these utterances are not understood as “revelations” in any usual sense; rather, they represent the responses of a uniquely insightful human being to the ever-changing events of the world in which he found himself.

A second factor to consider in our quest for a Buddhist analogue of “church language” is to be found in Buddhist attitudes toward language itself. The majority of Buddhist philosophers have identified language with discursive thought, which is considered to be partially (or relatively) true at best and totally erroneous at worst. To enter into a detailed discussion of the concepts of “relative” and “absolute” truth would take us far beyond the scope of this paper. It is important to point out, however, that in Buddhist philosophy language is never assigned to the level of the absolute, but remains consistently on a lower or relative plane.⁸

Third and last, we find in one of the earliest layers of Buddhist literature (the Vinaya or monastic rules) a story in which the Buddha is described as explicitly opposing the formalized recitation of his teachings in anything other than the local vernacular. According to this tale, two brahman brothers who had been converted to Buddhism were concerned that monks “of a variety of origins and family backgrounds” were corrupting the word of the Buddha by reciting his teachings each in his own way. “Let us remedy the situation,” suggested the brothers, “by putting the word of the Buddha into *chandās*.”⁹ The precise meaning of the term *chandās* is still a matter of considerable controversy;¹⁰ in general terms, however, it is associated with the style of recitation used for the Vedic

literature—that is, the religious literature with which the two brothers would have been most familiar. The Buddha's response to this suggestion, however, is not at all ambiguous: He forbids the recitation of his teachings in *chandās*, saying that whoever did so would be committing an offense against the monastic rule. Instead he instructs his followers to teach the word of the Buddha each in his own language.¹¹ The authority of the Buddha himself, then, was called upon to encourage the propagation of his teaching in local vernacular languages, and so inhibit the formation of a special “church language” for the recitation of the Buddhist scriptures. The fact that this story appears in texts belonging to a number of different schools supports an early date for its origin (that is, prior to the first major sectarian division in the Buddhist community, which took place approximately a century and a half after the death of the Buddha). The presence of this common tradition at an early stage in the history of the Buddhist religion thus must have served as a powerful deterrent to the creation of a special “church language” for religious use.

These three factors, then—the absence of a tradition of divine revelation, the general philosophical devaluation of language, and the tradition of the Buddha's advocacy of the use of the vernacular—would be expected to have led to the actual transmission of Buddhist literature in the language of everyday speech. These are, however, merely theoretical factors, resources for thinking about language that are present in the Buddhist repertoire. The more important question, for our purposes, is what was actually done with these resources. Were these ideas translated into action in the manner we would expect?

First of all, it is important to recall that during the first several centuries after the Buddha his teachings were passed down only in oral form. Not until late in the 1st century BCE (some four and a half centuries after the death of the Buddha, according to the “long chronology”¹²) were the words of the Buddha first set down in writing.¹³ Thus it is rather difficult to determine with any degree of certainty what language, or languages, were used for the transmission of Buddhist texts during these first several centuries. Fortunately, however, we do have some fragmentary evidence even from this early period. In the inscriptions of King Aśoka (r. circa

269-232 BCE) are recorded the titles of a few Buddhist texts; in these the local dialect—an eastern, or Māghadī, form of Prakrit—can be discerned.¹⁴ Later, with the development of a written Buddhist literature, considerably more evidence becomes available. Thus we have the entire Theravāda Buddhist canon, recorded in the composite Prakrit (i.e., vernacular¹⁵) language known as Pāli, and even within this linguistically homogenized corpus we can occasionally find traces of still older vernacular forms, perhaps belonging to more than one dialect.¹⁶ A recension of the *Dharmapada* (a compendium of edifying verses corresponding to the Pāli *Dhammapada*) composed in Gāndhārī, a vernacular Prakrit dialect of northwest India, was found in the Tarim Basin (modern Xinjiang, P.R.C.) near Khotan,¹⁷ and the language used for certain late Nikāya Buddhist¹⁸ and early Mahāyāna Buddhist texts, dubbed “Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit” by Franklin Edgerton,¹⁹ still carries considerable traces of vernacular speech. At least in these first several centuries after the Buddha, then, it seems fair to say that the principles outlined above were indeed being followed, and that the Buddhist teachings were disseminated in a variety of local Prakrit tongues. Subsequently, however, with the increasing use of literary Sanskrit by educated Hindu poets and philosophers, we find the Buddhists beginning to follow their lead and (particularly during and after the Gupta period, c. 320-467 CE) producing religious literature in more or less polished forms of Sanskrit. By this time, however, Buddhism had already passed through the oasis regions of Central Asia, en route to China, Korea and Japan. What principles of language selection, then, were being followed in these Central Asian communities?

Buddhist Languages Along the Silk Road

At first glance it would appear that the use of language by Buddhist missionaries in Central Asia closely parallels what we have observed in the Indian context. Archaeologists have unearthed a multitude of Buddhist texts in an astounding variety of languages, including members of the Iranian branch of the Indo-European family (Khotanese and Sogdian), a pair of non-Iranian Indo-European languages (Tokharian A and B, also known as

“Agnean” and “Kuchean” after Agni and Kucha, the cities which were the apparent centers of their use), the Altaic family (Uighur Turkish and, from a later period, Mongolian), and of course Tibetan and Chinese, as well as numerous documents in Sanskrit and Gāndhārī Prakrit. Given this vast quantity of material, one is inclined at first to agree with the great Buddhologist Étienne Lamotte that “the Buddhist missionaries adopted without hesitation the use of ... languages of Central Asia” to disseminate the word of the Buddha in this region.²⁰ A closer look at the evidence, however, demonstrates that matters are not so straightforward. As far as the *quantity* of materials is concerned, Lamotte is certainly correct; yet if we look at the chronology of these texts a surprising pattern emerges: Not a single Buddhist text in a Central Asian vernacular language can be assigned to a date earlier than the beginning of the 6th century, and the majority were produced in the 8th century and after. Thus the earliest extant Buddhist literature in local vernaculars dates from some five centuries after the time that we know Buddhism must first have passed through this region.²¹ In other words, it would seem that the language policy established by the Buddhist community in India was not being followed in Central Asia, at least during the early centuries of the Common Era.

To construct an argument from silence using data from Central Asia, however, can be extremely hazardous, given the paucity of sources that have come down to us. First, therefore, we must consider the possibility that this aberrant pattern is due simply to an accident of preservation. We may begin by asking what languages we would *expect* to have been used for the recording of Buddhist literature in Central Asia during the first half of the first millennium CE, and then attempt to determine whether there is any evidence—direct or indirect—that Buddhist texts once existed in these languages.

A glance at the roster of the earliest Buddhist missionaries in China shows clearly that the first Buddhist spokesmen in East Asia—those who carried out their work beginning from around the first century BCE down to 265 of the Common Era—were predominantly Central Asian nationals, not natives of the Indian subcontinent.²² More specifically, the majority of these earliest missionaries were natives of the western (now Afghan and Soviet) part

of Central Asia, identifiable by their Chinese ethnonyms as Parthians (ethnonym *an* 安), *Sogdians* (*k'ang* 康), and Yüeh-chih 月氏 (ethnonym *chih* 支), the latter to be identified with the Kushans, a Central Asian people who ruled northwest India and adjacent regions from around the 1st to the 4th centuries CE. On the basis of this information we can postulate the existence of Buddhist communities in each of their respective homelands, and indeed archaeological studies have already confirmed the presence of Buddhist remains in two of these areas.²³

But where, we might ask, is the Buddhist literature in these languages? Despite the importance of the early Parthian missionaries to China (among whom An Shih-kao and An-hsüan are two of the best known), not a single Buddhist text in the Parthian language has come down to us.²⁴ Nor have any Buddhist writings surfaced in Bactrian, the official language of the Kushans beginning in the time of King Kanishka (c. late 1st-early 2nd c. CE).²⁵ In the case of the Sogdian language the data is even more perplexing: Though the Sogdians are well represented among the earliest Buddhist missionaries to China, surviving Buddhist documents in Sogdian are uniformly late (8th-9th c. CE) and—with only two possible exceptions—consist exclusively of translations from the Chinese!²⁶

Still we must consider the possibility that there *was* an earlier Buddhist literature written in these languages, but that it since has been lost. Is there any in direct evidence for the existence of such literature? First we should take note of a fact that I have implied, but not made explicit, until now: that there *are* Buddhist texts from Central Asia dating from well before the 6th century, but these are uniformly in Gāndhārī Prakrit or Sanskrit. Thus what we have is not the total absence of written Buddhist literature before the 6th century, but simply the lack of such literature in the local vernaculars.

At this point we may turn to the evidence provided by the earliest translations of Buddhist texts into Chinese, for these texts—with their copious use of transliteration to represent Buddhist proper names and technical terms—can offer insight into the language(s) from which they might have been translated. Once again, however, the Chinese evidence confirms what we have already seen: Not a

single Chinese Buddhist text has been shown to be a translation from any Central Asian language, and the many irregularities in the transcription of Indian terms have now been shown, almost without exception, to be due to the influence of Prakrit dialectal forms.²⁷ We find, then, no independent confirmation from the Chinese sources for the existence of a Buddhist literature in any Central Asian vernacular. Thus we are left only with the evidence provided by the Central Asian texts themselves: that is, that Buddhist scriptures began to appear in the vernacular languages of Central Asia only around the beginning of the 6th century.

In addition to this chronological anomaly, we must now turn our attention to a geographical one. For although that explosion of vernacular Buddhist literature to which Lamotte referred does indeed take place in the eastern part of Central Asia, in the West just the opposite is the case: *Not a single Buddhist text written in a local Central Asian vernacular has ever been discovered west of Kashgar.* We must be careful, however, not to draw premature conclusions from this fact. The climate in western Central Asia (modern Afghanistan and Soviet Central Asia) is much more humid than that of Xinjiang, thus the chances of survival of texts written on organic material—whether on palm leaves imported from India, locally produced birchbark, leather (long a favored writing material among Iranian peoples, but little used by the Buddhists for obvious reasons), or (from the 7th century onward) paper²⁸—were considerably lower here than in the East. A few scraps of Buddhist writings have survived, however, and these are uniformly written not in local languages but in Sanskrit.

One obvious question should be asked before proceeding any further. Is the absence of Buddhist vernacular literature just a special case of a more general absence of vernacular writing? That is, is there a complete lack of vernacular literature in this region during the period with which we are concerned? At least in the West—which is precisely the region in which we find a total absence of Buddhist literature in local languages in *any* period—this was certainly not the case. In the wake of the disintegration of the Achaemenid empire (after 336 BCE) the Aramaic writing system that had been used for official Achaemenid documents gave rise to a number of local scripts, which were then employed to write ver-

anacular languages. Among these were the Parthian script (used to write the Middle Iranian Parthian language), the Sogdian script (used to write Sogdian, another Middle Iranian language once spoken in what is now the Soviet province of Uzbekistan) and the Kharoṣṭhī script (used to write Gāndhārī, a Prakrit dialect spoken in northwest India and adjoining regions). Likewise the Bactrian language (yet another Middle Iranian tongue) was freely recorded in writing, using a slightly modified version of the Greek alphabet. The use of all four of these vernacular languages is amply attested in coins, inscriptions, and secular documents.²⁹ Thus we can establish beyond question that the capacity to write in vernacular languages was indeed present.

A comparison with the Chinese situation casts the Central Asian data in even sharper relief. Buddhist texts were being translated into Chinese, purportedly by Central Asian nationals, a full four centuries before the appearance of the earliest Central Asian vernacular Buddhist texts. What, then, could be the explanation for this discrepancy?

The difficulty of forming a complete picture of Central Asian history, given the paucity of primary sources from this region, has already been mentioned. The difficulties are multiplied when we take the further step of trying to provide an explanation for the data that we do have. Such an attempt is necessary, however, if we are to make any sense out of the evidence at hand, which suggests that Central Asian Buddhists read their scriptures only in Indian languages until the 6th century, after which a sweeping “vernacularization” movement took place—but *only* in the East. Two parts of this scenario seem to demand an explanation: first, why Central Asian Buddhists apparently deviated from the language policy set by their Indian counterparts, at least prior to the Gupta period, that stressed the dissemination of Buddhist scriptures in local vernaculars; and second, why such an explosion of vernacular Buddhist literature began to appear in Xinjiang during and after the 6th century—but never, it would seem, farther West.

The Development of “Church Language” in Central Asia: Origins of a Policy Change

We may begin by considering factors that might have inhibited the translation of Buddhist literature into the languages of Central

Asia. As we have already seen, we cannot appeal to the absence of a usable script or of a tradition of vernacular writing. As to other contributing factors, however, at least two possibilities can be identified: first, the impact of what I would call a “border region mentality,” and second, the linguistic affiliation of the Central Asian vernaculars themselves.

Perhaps the greatest difference between the Chinese context, where incoming Buddhist scriptures were immediately rendered into the Chinese language, and that of the Central Asian oasis cultures with which we are concerned, is one of cultural gravitational force. By the time the Chinese were first exposed to Buddhist ideas (c. 1st c. BCE) they were already able to claim a long and distinguished cultural history, preserved in written records dating back to at least the 14th century BCE. In spatial terms, too, China could well claim to be a major civilization, dominating a broad expanse of territory and surrounded by peoples whose cultures were clearly (from the Chinese perspective) at a lower, even “barbarian” level. Under these circumstances it is hardly surprising that China should have developed a cultural superiority complex with respect to its neighbors, an attitude we might describe as the “middle kingdom mentality.” For the Chinese, then, it was only natural to translate the Buddhist scriptures into their own vernacular language.³⁰ Indeed, to have maintained them in their original Prakrit or Sanskrit forms would have been to expose them to constant criticism as “barbarian writings,” a situation that would only have exacerbated the problems experienced by the Buddhist tradition in attempting to gain legitimacy as a foreign religion. In contrast to the relatively short history and small territorial expanse of the city-states of Central Asia, China was long since accustomed to singing the praises of its own civilization. In short, every cultural impulse led to the desire to domesticate the Buddhist tradition.

But is this not the case, one might argue, in every culture? Does not every group see its own way of life as superior to others? In certain mundane respects—such as food preferences, marital customs, and ideas of what constitutes politeness—this is undoubtedly true. Yet in the realm of religion we can observe a number of divergences from the Chinese pattern. In Japan, for example, the Buddhist canon has never been rendered into Japanese; those who would

study the scriptures must read them in their Chinese translations.³¹ An even more striking example is that of the Mongols, who under government sponsorship translated the entire Buddhist canon into Mongolian during the late 16th and early 17th centuries, only to set it aside largely unused, preferring to read the scriptures in their Tibetan “originals.”³²

One possible factor in the reluctance of the Central Asian oasis dwellers to translate the Buddhist scriptures into their local vernaculars, then, may well have been such a “border region mentality” with respect to the subcontinent of India. As both a major world civilization and the original homeland of the Buddhist religion, India was unquestionably in a position to inspire such humility on the part of its neighbors.

Yet another factor, however, may well have served to retard the translation of Buddhist scriptures into Central Asian languages. In the modern period this region has been dominated by Turkish-speaking peoples; indeed the areas with which we are concerned (with the exception of Afghanistan) are frequently referred to as East and West “Turkestan.” In the pre-Mongol period, however (i.e., prior to the 13th century), the majority of the population of Central Asia was linguistically Indo-European. This does not mean, of course, that Buddhist texts written in Prakrit or Sanskrit were comprehensible to the local population; it does mean, though, that they could *become* comprehensible—at least to a religious élite—after a reasonable period of study.³³ The relation of Prakrit (and subsequently Sanskrit) to the languages of Central Asia is thus comparable to that of Latin with respect to the Romance languages of Christian medieval Europe.

In China, by contrast, an entirely different linguistic situation prevailed. It would be difficult to find two more dissimilar languages than Chinese and Sanskrit (or Prakrit). The language families to which they belong are totally unrelated, their grammars are a study in contrasts, and they shared (at least prior to the arrival of Buddhism in China) virtually no vocabulary in common. In short, if the Buddhist scriptures were to be comprehended at all in China, their translation into Chinese was essential. The combination of these two factors—the operation of a “border region mentality” and the linguistic affinity between the languages of India

and those of the Central Asian oasis towns—may well be sufficient to explain the reluctance on the part of Central Asian converts to Buddhism to render the scriptures into their own languages.³⁴

We are still confronted, however, by an equally difficult question: If these two factors (which were still in effect after the 6th century) were indeed responsible for the use of a Buddhist “church language” in Central Asia, why then do we witness the sudden flowering of a vernacular Buddhist literature during subsequent centuries?

The “Vernacular Revolution” in Central Asian Buddhist Literature

We may begin by considering the cultural and political landscape of Central Asia and its environs during the period with which we are concerned. As we have already observed, the “vernacular revolution” takes place only in eastern, not western, Central Asia. Thus in considering the neighboring regions of Central Asia we will be concerned above all with China. During the early 6th century northern China was controlled by two powerful non-Chinese dynasties, the Northern Wei and the Northern Chou, in which Buddhism played a key role, being alternately persecuted and supported by the government. Moreover, it is precisely at this time that we first hear of a Buddhist text, the *Nirvāṇa-sūtra*, being translated into the Old Turkish language, at the initiative of the Northern Ch’i court.³⁵ In the following century, as the powerful Chinese T’ang dynasty began to assert itself, Chinese military forces appeared in eastern Central Asia for the first time since the latter Han Dynasty (1st-2nd c. CE). This military expansion was to continue (with occasional setbacks) until the middle of the 8th century, when the decisive defeat of the Chinese forces by the Arabs at the battle of Talas set a limit, once and for all, to China’s ambitions for expansion to the West. Finally, this is also the period (already underway in the 5th century) of the justly famous voyages across Central Asia to India by a number of Chinese Buddhist pilgrims, whose own “middle kingdom mentality” is evident in the fact that they were not averse to lecturing other Buddhists—even in the Buddha’s own homeland of India—on which the competing Buddhist teachings were correct.³⁶ In short, the period in which we

witness an explosion of vernacular Buddhist literature in Central Asia is a time then the Chinese had assumed a high profile in this region, wielding considerable influence in eastern (but not western) Central Asia.

In light of these circumstances, we may consider the following hypothesis: Could the shift to a vernacular Buddhist literature beginning in the 6th c. CE—which took place in eastern, but not western, Central Asia—have been due to the presence of Chinese influence? More specifically, could the inhabitants of Central Asia have begun to translate Buddhist texts into the vernacular under the influence of the Chinese example?

The difficulty of interpreting the few primary Central Asian materials at our disposal has already been alluded to, and if we rarely have adequate information on *what* happened in this region, we almost never have any concrete evidence for *why* it took place. But in one precious instance we have a primary source that casts light on the subject of our inquiry. Among the manuscript remains preserved in the Khotanese language—another Middle Iranian language, spoken in the city of Khotan (and adjacent regions) in the southwest part of the Tarim Basin—is a kind of Buddhist sourcebook, an anthology of “best-loved Buddhist texts” of Khotan. The language and orthography of this work, which is composed entirely in verse, are among the oldest in all of Khotanese literature,³⁷ which would point to a date of composition around the beginning of the 8th century.³⁸ Neither the name of the composer of the text nor the title of the work itself has come down to us; that of the official who commissioned the work, however—a certain *Zambasta*—has been preserved. It was this name that the renowned Iranist Sir H. W. Bailey chose when he labelled the text *The Book of Zambasta*.³⁹

This work is of tremendous value for a number of reasons. It is our main source of knowledge of Khotanese metrics, and is also a major source of information on the stories, deities, and religious ideas that were familiar in 7th-8th century Khotan. For our present purposes, however, its greatest value lies in a parenthetical remark made by the composer, in which he explains his motivation for rendering this selection of Buddhist texts into Khotanese. The composer’s reflections appear at the beginning of the 23rd chapter, where he states:

I intend to translate it into Khotanese for the welfare of all beings, this tale of how the *deva* Buddha descended from the *trāyastriṃsa*-gods.... Not such are their deeds: the Khotanese do not value the Law [i.e., the Buddhist teachings] at all in Khotanese. They understand it badly in Indian. In Khotanese it does not seem to them to be the Law. For the Chinese the Law is in Chinese. In Kashmirian it is very agreeable, but they so learn it in Kashmirian that they also understand the meaning of it. To the Khotanese that seems to be the Law whose meaning they do not understand at all.... In words the essential thing is the meaning.... The meaning being unperceived, no one would escape from the woes in *samsāra*.⁴⁰

The “Kashmirian” language to which the composer refers is almost certainly Sanskrit, the language from which most of the Khotanese Buddhist works were apparently translated (the earlier tradition having been based on Prakrit texts).⁴¹ What is quite clear in the composer’s remarks, however, is his insistence that his countrymen should abandon their practice of reading Buddhist texts in “Kashmirian,” and record them instead—as he himself is doing—in Khotanese.

This brief but invaluable passage provides us with two key pieces of information: first, that the Khotanese had a high degree of resistance to the idea of translating Buddhist texts into the vernacular, preferring to read them instead in their Indian originals; and second, that the Chinese precedent of vernacular translation was well enough known for the composer to appeal to it for support. Far from being less authoritative, the composer argues, the scriptures will become valuable to the Khotanese people only if they are *understood*—just as they are, he asserts, in China.

What this passage suggests, then, is that Chinese translation practices contributed directly to the flowering of Buddhist literature in Central Asian vernaculars, a process which seems to have begun in the 6th century in Kucha and Agni and spread to other areas (including Khotan) in the 7th and 8th. Moreover, the fact that our Khotanese composer appeals not to the translation practices of his nearest neighbors (the Tokharian speakers of Agni and Kucha) but to the more distant example of China speaks volumes about the cultural hegemony that China was able to exert in this region.

In sum, this data suggests that we should begin to consider China not merely as the recipient of Buddhist traditions from the Western

Regions, but also as the *source* of certain elements in the later history of Central Asian Buddhism. And indeed an examination of the later Central Asian Buddhist literature confirms this impression. Most of the Buddhist texts preserved in Uighur Turkish (c. 8th-12th c. CE) and all but two of those preserved in the Sogdian language (8th-9th c. CE) have been shown to be translations from the Chinese.⁴² In Khotan (as in Tibet) Buddhist texts continued to be translated mainly from Indian originals, but as we can see from the testimony of the *Book of Zambasta* the Chinese precedent was influential even in the far southwest corner of Xinjiang.

Conclusions

We may conclude, then, with two general observations. First, Buddhist literature in Central Asia appears to have been transmitted exclusively in Indian languages prior to the beginning of the 6th century. And second, the subsequent flourishing of Buddhist vernacular literature in the eastern parts of this region—but not in the west—may well have taken place under Chinese influence. From this we may draw two further conclusions: first, that the “language policy” followed by Buddhist believers has been far from monolithic, but rather has varied from place to place and from time to time, according to differing local cultural conditions; and second, that while China did indeed play a receptive role with respect to Buddhists from Central Asia during the early centuries of the first millennium, its role shifted to a far more active one after the beginning of the 6th century. Indeed it might be fair to say that by the 8th century for at least some Central Asian believers—most notably the Sogdians and the Uighurs—the center of gravity of the Buddhist world had shifted from India to China. The “middle country” of *Mādhyadeśa* in northeast India was now replaced by the “middle kingdom” of China, which would remain a major source of Buddhist inspiration for the peoples of Central Asia until the eventual coming of Islam.

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¹ In this paper I use the term "Central Asia" in the narrow sense, to refer only to the chain of oasis towns crisscrossing the southern, desert portion of Inner Asia. This area, which comprises the territory of the ancient "Silk Road," has certain features that distinguish it both from the grasslands frequented by nomadic peoples (including the Mongols) to the north and from the Tibetan highlands to the south. Most notably, it is this chain of oasis towns (and not the territory of the Tibetans or the Mongols, which remained throughout their history outside the main routes of transportation) that served as the conduit along which Buddhism travelled from northwest India to the Chinese frontier. Accordingly, I would suggest that the term "Central Asia" be reserved for the territory of the Silk Road alone, and that the expression "Inner Asia" be employed (as many specialists in the field are already doing) to designate the entire region of Central Eurasia. For further details see my article "Buddhism in Central Asia: The State of the Field" (*History of Religions*, forthcoming, 1991).

² John Brough, "Comments on Third-Century Shan-shan and the History of Buddhism," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 28 (1965), 582-612 (p. 582).

³ First proposed in his article "Methodology in Iranian History," in R. N. Frye, ed., *Neue Methodologie in der Iranistik* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1974), pp. 57-69 (p. 64), and elaborated in a lecture delivered at Harvard University, October 1986.

⁴ For a discussion of "church language" from a history-of-religions perspectives see Wade T. Wheelock, "The Problem of Ritual Language: From Information to Situation," in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 50 (1982), 49-71; and the article "Sacred Language" by the same author in Mircea Eliade, ed., *Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 8 (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 439-449.

⁵ See William A. Graham, *Beyond the Written Word: Oral Aspects of Scripture in the History of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), and Miriam Levering, ed., *Rethinking Scripture: Essays from a Comparative Perspective* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1988).

⁶ For recent studies on the concept of the power of sound in Indian religion see Harvey P. Alper, ed., *Understanding Mantra* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1988).

⁷ There are, of course, exceptions to this rule; the texts of the Vinaya ("monastic rules") section of the canon begin not with this entire phrase, but with the more abbreviated expression "at one time" (Pali *tena samayena* and variants), while the Abhidharma (Pali *abhidhamma*) and portions of the *Kṣudraka-āgama* (Pali *Khuddaka-nikāya*) sections of the canon begin with no such introductory phrase at all. It is worthy of note, however, that the absence of such an opening phrase was considered by some Buddhists to be sufficient evidence that the Abhidharma literature was extracanonical (that is, not the word of the Buddha); for this opinion (cited by the 5th-century Theravādin writer Buddhaghosa, who does not however share this view) see the *Aṭṭhasālinī* (Buddhaghosa's commentary on the *Dhammasaṅgani*, the first book of the Theravāda *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*) translated into English as *The Expositor* by Pe Maung Tin and C. A. F. Rhys Davids (London: Luzac & Co., 1920), vol. 1, p. 37-38.

⁸ This does not mean, of course, that Buddhists were incapable of reifying the written word; we need only refer to the now well-known "cult of the book" (see

Gregory Schopen, "The Phrase 'sa prativipradeśaś caityabhūto bhavet' in the *Vajracchedikā*: Notes on the Cult of the Book in Mahāyāna," *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 17 [1975], 147-181). Likewise we find in Buddhist history examples of the reification of the non-written word (or rather, of the written word reproduced in oral form); a striking example of this phenomenon may be found in the teachings of the 13th-century Japanese evangelist Nichiren, who advocated the chanting of the title of the *Lotus Sūtra* (or rather, the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese translation of the Sanskrit title of the text); for an up-to-date analysis of his life and works see the forthcoming Ph.D. dissertation by Jacqueline I. Stone (U.C.L.A., Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, 1990). Despite these examples, however, there was always present in the Buddhist tradition a powerful corrective to extreme versions of this tendency

⁹ Étienne Lamotte, *Histoire du bouddhisme indien* (Louvain: Institut Orientaliste, 1958), p. 610, citing the Pali Vinaya (II, p. 139).

¹⁰ See Franklin W. Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), pp. 1-2 and especially p. 1, n. 4, and more recently John Brough, "Sakāya Niruttiyā: Cauld kale het" (pp. 35-42) and K. R. Norman, "The Dialects in Which the Buddha Preached" (pp. 61-77), both in Heinz Bechert, ed., *Die Sprache der ältesten buddhistischen Überlieferung*, Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Phil.-Hist. Klasse, Dritte Folge, Nr. 117 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980).

¹¹ Lamotte, *Histoire*, p. 611.

¹² On the "long" and "short" chronologies for the Buddha's life see Lamotte, *Histoire*, pp. 13-15, and more recently Heinz Bechert, "The Date of the Buddha Reconsidered," *Indologica Taurinensia*, vol. 1 (1982), 29-36.

¹³ On the first recording of the Buddha's teachings in writing see Lamotte, *Histoire*, pp. 402-403 and 710-711.

¹⁴ Jules Bloch, ed. and trans., *Les Inscriptions d'Asoka* (Paris: Société d'Édition "Belles Lettres," 1950), p. 154, n. 5; cf. S. Lévi in *Journal Asiatique*, 1912, II, p. 495.

¹⁵ The term "Prakrit" refers, strictly speaking, to a vernacular or "natural" language, in contrast to the polished or "cultivated" form of classical Sanskrit. The name is also applied, however, to the Pali language, which is not a real vernacular (i.e., a spoken language) but a literary language based on vernacular forms. For a discussion of the varieties of Prakrit dialects and their place in Indian literature see Maurice Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature*, 2nd ed., Eng. trans. by Mrs. S. Ketkar (1927; rpt. New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corp., 1972), vol. 1, pp. 46-51, and more recently Oskar von Hinüber, *Das ältere Mittelindisch in Überblick* (Vienna, 1986).

¹⁶ On "Magadhisms" (variant non-Pāli forms, attributed to the influence of an underlying Māgadhī dialect) in the Theravāda canon see the pioneering works by Sylvain Lévi, "Observations sur une langue précanonique du bouddhisme," *Journal Asiatique*, 1912, pp. 495-514) and Heinrich Lüders, *Beobachtungen über die Sprache des buddhistischen Urkanons*, ed. by Ernst Waldschmidt (Berlin, 1954). These are now to be supplemented by more recent studies, a valuable collection assembled in Heinz Bechert, ed., *Die Sprache* (cited above, note 10).

¹⁷ For an edition of the text with a scholarly introduction see John Brough, *The Gāndhārī Dharmapada* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962).

¹⁸ The term "Nikāya" (lit. "group" or "school") refers to the various Buddhist schools (or, less accurately, "sects") that emerged in the wake of the initial

schism between the Sthaviras ("elders") and Mahāsāṃghikas ("majority-ists") that occurred approximately a century and a half after the death of the Buddha. The partisans of these schools (of which there were eighteen, according to an idealized traditional figure) are sometimes referred to as members of the "Hīnayāna" ("inferior vehicle") by advocates of the self-styled "Mahāyāna" ("great vehicle") schools, but the term "Hīnayāna" is clearly polemical and should be avoided in scholarly writing except in direct quotations of polemical discourse. Some scholars have chosen to use the Pāli term Theravāda ("teaching of the elders") in place of the pejorative "Hīnayāna," but this is not an adequate substitute as it refers to only one of the numerous non-Mahāyāna schools, albeit the only one that survives today. The term "Nikāya Buddhism" is to be preferred, as it encompasses all of the so-called "eighteen schools," both prior to and after the emergence of the Mahāyāna.

¹⁹ See Edgerton's articles "The Prakrit Underlying Buddhistic Hybrid Sanskrit," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, VIII (1936), 501-516, and "Meter, Phonology, and Orthography in Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 66 (1946), 197-206.

²⁰ Lamotte, *Histoire*, p. 607.

²¹ The date of the first appearance of Buddhism in China is not known. A tangential mention of Buddhists in an edict of 65 C.E., however, establishes that the religion was already known, and had gained adherents, in China by that date (see Erik Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China* [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1959], p. 19).

²² J. W. de Jong, "Buddha's Word in China," 28th George Ernest Morrison Lecture (Canberra, Australian National University, n.d. [c. 1960]; reprinted in Gregory Schopen, ed., *Buddhist Studies: Selected Essays of J. W. de Jong* [Berkeley: Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series, 1979], pp. 77-101), p. 6 (p. 82 of the reprint edition).

²³ On the Buddhism in Parthia see G. Koshelenko, "The Beginnings of Buddhism in Margiana," *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, vol. 14 (1966), pp. 175-183, for a discussion of the discovery of a stupa site in the Merv oasis, dating from the late Arsacid period (2nd c. CE). On Buddhism in Bactria, the base from which the Kushans established a powerful dynasty in northwest India, see B. Ya. Stavisky, "Kara Tepe in Old Termez: A Buddhist Religious Centre of the Kushan Period on the Bank of the Oxus," in J. Harmatta, ed., *From Hecataeus to Al-Huwārizmī: Bactrian, Pahlavi, Sogdian, Persian, Sanskrit, Syriac, Arabic, Chinese, Greek and Latin Sources for the History of Pre-Islamic Central Asia* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1984), pp. 95-135. No Buddhist remains have yet been found in Sogdiana, despite the fact that the Sogdians (identified by the Chinese-language ethnonym *K'ang*, derived from the final syllable of the city of Samarkand) are well attested among the earliest Buddhist missionaries in China. It is possible that this is an accident of historical survival; it seems more likely at present, however, that Sogdian Buddhism was (unlike Parthian Buddhism) essentially an expatriate phenomenon.

²⁴ There is evidence, however, that individual Buddhist terms may have been transmitted into other Central Asian languages through Parthian. See Nicholas Sims-Williams, "Indian Elements in Parthian and Sogdian," in Klaus Rührborn and Wolfgang Veenker, eds., *Sprachen des Buddhismus in Zentralasien* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1983), 132-141.

²⁵ Specialists in the Bactrian field have speculated that such literature must once have existed, and might someday be discovered; see for example B. Ya. Stavisky,

“Kara Tepe in Old Termez,” in J. Harmatta, ed., *From Hectaeus to Al-Huwārizmī* (cited above, n. 23), 95-135 (esp. p. 133), and Richard N. Frye, “Kushans and Other Iranians in Central Asia,” in *Reşid Rahmeti Arat İçin* (Ankara: Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 1966), pp. 244-247. For an argument that one of the extant Bactrian fragments is from a Buddhist text (based, however, on a single reference to a “king of the *rakşasas*”) see I. Gershevitch, “Bactrian Inscriptions and Manuscripts,” in *Indogermanische Forschungen*, 72 (1967), 27-57 (esp. pp. 38 and 40, n. 18).

²⁶ On Buddhist literature in Sogdian see David Utz, *A Survey of Buddhist Sogdian Studies*, Bibliographia Philologica Buddhica, Series Minor, III (Tokyo: The Reiyukai Library, 1978). For the two exceptions see below, note 39.

²⁷ See Franz Bernhard, “Gāndhārī and the Buddhist Mission in Central Asia,” in J. Tilakairi, ed., *Añjali, Felicitation Volume Presented to Olives Hector de Alevis Wiyesequera on his 60th Birthday* (Peradeniya, 1970), pp. 55-62 (especially pp. 58-60 and the further references cited on p. 62, n. 17).

²⁸ The use of paper, invented in China at the beginning of the 2nd c. CE, spread relatively slowly across Central Asia, and even more slowly into India itself. The first recorded instance of the production of paper by Central Asians was in Sogdiana, where paper-making was begun in Samarkand in 751 (Dard Hunter, *Papermaking*, 2nd revised ed. [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947], p. 469). Paper imported from China came into use in eastern Central Asia by the early 3rd century (as attested in the paper documents among the texts discovered at Niya), but appears to have been adopted in western Central Asia only around the middle of the 7th century (*op. cit.*, p. 468). In India paper did not appear on the scene until it was brought by the Muslims in the 11th century, and accordingly it was distrusted by the local people as the writing material of the “heretics,” a reaction which had also slowed its acceptance in Europe (*op. cit.*, p. 60).

²⁹ The use of the Parthian language and script to record civil documents is amply attested from around the beginning of the 1st c. B.C.E., while coin legends in Parthian began to appear in the middle of the following century. Parthian-language inscriptions appear only from the beginning of the 3rd century, earlier monuments having been recorded in Aramaic or Greek. For an admirable overview of Parthian literature and literary traditions see Mary Boyce, “Parthian Writings and Literature,” in Ehsan Yarshater, ed., *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 3, part 2, *The Seleucid, Parthian and Sasanian Periods* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 1151-1165.

The oldest evidence for the use of the written Sogdian language is in coin legends, which date from perhaps the middle of the 2nd c. C.E. From the 4th century we have both personal correspondence (the so-called “Sogdian ancient letters”) found at Tun-huang and ostraca from the region of Bukhara. Justly famous (though considerably later) are the documents found at Mount Mugh in northern Tadzhikistan, which date from the beginning of the 8th century and comprised the archives of the Sogdian ruler Dēwāstīč. The extant Sogdian inscriptions are quite late (9th and 10th centuries) and from outside the Sogdian homeland; one is from Mongolia (a trilingual inscription in Sogdian, Chinese, and Uighur Turkish), and the other from Ladakh. For a survey of the extant Sogdian literature see Mark Dresden, “Sogdian Language and Literature,” in Yarshater, *op. cit.*, pp. 1216-1229.

The Bactrian language, presumably the native tongue of the Kushans by the time they established a foothold in northwest India, was recorded not in a script

derived from Aramaic (as were Parthian and Sogdian), but in a slightly modified form of Greek. The use of the Bactrian language is first attested on the coins of the Kushan ruler Kanishka; their date is problematic, however, since the reign dates of that ruler are far from the subject of consensus (see A. L. Basham, ed., *Papers on the Date of Kanishka* [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968]). A date of the late 1st or early 2nd c. C.E. would probably not be far from the mark. The inscriptional use of the language is attested soon after, in the Nokonzok inscription dated to the 2nd century C.E. and the inscriptions found at Dilberjin (modern Afghanistan) and near Tirmidh (Uzbekistan, U.S.S.R.), both assigned to the 3rd or 4th c. C.E. Manuscript fragments have been discovered to date only in eastern Central Asia, where texts have been found in the Turfan area and at Lou-lan; these vary in date from the 4th century to the 9th. For a survey of extant Bactrian sources see Ilya Gershevitch, "Bactrian Literature," in Yarshater, *op. cit.*, pp. 1250-1258.

The use of a local Prakrit dialect for inscriptions is attested already by the monuments of King Aśoka (ruled c. 269-232 B.C.E.), and is continued in the Aramaic-based Kharoṣṭhī script by the Greeks, Sakas and Parthians in the far northwest of India from around the 1st century B.C.E. until well into the following millennium. The use of Prakrit (likewise in the Kharoṣṭhī script) for coin legends begins in the reign of Demetrius, who established what is known as "Indo-Greek" rule south of the Hindu Kush in around 180 B.C.E., and ruled this area until his death c. 170 B.C.E. That the language must have been used for civil documents is quite certain, though extant texts have been found only in eastern Central Asia (in the Lou-lan area of modern Xinjiang), dating perhaps from the early part of the 3rd century. No convenient summary of this literature as a whole is available. For the Aśokan inscriptions see the edition of Bloch (cited above, n. 14). For the use of Prakrit on Indo-Greek, Saka, and early Kushan coins see Michael Mitchiner, *Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian Coinage*, 9 vols. (London: Hawkins Publications, 1975), K. Walton Dobbins, *Coinage and Epigraphy of the Śakas and Pahlavas: A Reconstruction of the Political Chronology and Geography of the Indo-Iranian Borderlands, 130 B.C.-A.D. 70* (Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, 1972), and John R. Rosenfield, *Dynastic Arts of the Kushans* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967).

³⁰ Or rather, into a literary version of Chinese. Buddhist texts in Chinese are almost all composed in the elevated, literary style known as *wen-yen*; those texts composed in a genuine vernacular (e.g., certain Ch'an texts and the well-known *pien-wen* found at Tun-huang) are the exceptions rather than the rule. The important point here, however, is that Buddhist texts were indeed translated into Chinese (even though they followed the conventions that separated written Chinese in general from the spoken language), and not retained in an Indian language.

³¹ Certain individual scriptures have, of course, been rendered into vernacular Japanese, but this has never been done for the Buddhist canon as a whole. Beginning in the early 20th century an attempt was made to issue the entire canon in so-called "Japanese reading," a project known as the *Kokuyaku Issaikyō* ("National Translation of all the Sūtras"). This is not, however, a genuine "translation," but merely the rearrangement of the characters in the Chinese texts into Japanese syntactic order, together with the insertion of certain syllables in *kana* (Japanese syllabic writing) to reflect the grammatical categories of Japanese, all based on the *kaeriten* ("return marks") system developed centuries earlier. Nor is this in fact a "complete" rendition of the Buddhist scriptures into semi-Japanese; despite its

name, the series (to date) contains only a portion of the works included in the Chinese Buddhist cannon.

³² On the translation of the Tibetan Buddhist canon into Mongolian see Walter Heissig, "Zur geistigen Leistung der neubekehrten Mongolen des späten 16. und frühen 17. Jhdts.," *Ural-altaische Jahrbücher*, vol. XXVI (1954), 101-116. The preference of the Mongols for the Tibetan version of the scriptures rather than their laboriously executed Mongolian translations is well documented, and has persisted into the 20th century. See for example George A. Cheney, *The Pre-Revolutionary Culture of Outer Mongolia*, Mongolia Society Occasional Papers, no. 5 (Bloomington, IN: The Mongolia Society, 1969), pp. 72-73; Paul Hyer and Sechin Jagchid, *A Mongolian Living Buddha: Biography of the Kanjurwa Khutugtu* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1983), pp. 73-74; and for numerous examples of writing by Mongolian scholars in Tibetan rather than in their own language see Sh. Bira, *Mongolian Historical Literature of the XVII-XIX Centuries Written in Tibetan*, ed. Prof. Ts. Damdinsüren, translated from the Russian by Stanley N. Frye, Mongolia Society Occasional Papers, no. 7 (Bloomington, IN: The Mongolia Society, 1970).

³³ An alternative explanation is offered by Richard Salomon of the University of Washington, who suggests that the role of Gāndhārī Prakrit as the written administrative language in this region may have been a more important factor in preparing the way for the transmission of Prakrit and Sanskrit Buddhist texts than was the Indo-European character of the local spoken vernaculars (personal communication, 1989).

³⁴ An interesting contrast is offered by the Tibetan example, in which only one of these two factors was operative. The Tibetans, speaking a language more closely related to Chinese than to Sanskrit, found it necessary to translate the Buddhist canon into Tibetan, which they did beginning in the 7th century CE. The style of translation, however, offers clear evidence of the "border region mentality" in operation: the Tibetans were so slavish in their rendition of Sanskrit expressions that it is almost possible to reconstruct the Sanskrit original from the Tibetan translation, working backwards from each prefix, root, and suffix to the corresponding Indian element. The result was a wooden and complex language that bears scant resemblance even to the written administrative Tibetan language of the time. Buddhist Tibetan thus cannot in any sense be described as a "vernacular"; rather, it is an artificially created "church language" that uses vernacular elements to produce what are essentially calques on Sanskrit forms. This terminology was standardized at the beginning of the 9th century and recorded in a number of Sanskrit-Tibetan dictionaries, of which the best known is the *Mahāvīyutpatti*. For a discussion of the early history of Tibetan Buddhist translation techniques see Nils Simonsson, *Indo-tibetische Studien* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1957).

³⁵ See Annemarie von Gabain, "Buddhistische Türkenmissionen," in *Asiatica, Festschrift Friedrich Weller* (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1954), pp. 161-173 (especially p. 164).

³⁶ Samuel Beal, trans., *The life of Hiuen-tsiang* (1911; rpt. Westport, CT: Hyperion Press, 1973), pp. 173-181. For a popular account of this encounter see René Grousset, *In the Footsteps of the Buddha* (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1932), pp. 204-211.

³⁷ R. E. Emmerick, ed. and trans., *The Book of Zambasta: A Khotanese Poem on Buddhism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. vii.

³⁸ R. E. Emmerick, in Ehsan Yarshater, ed., *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 3, part 2 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 964.

³⁹ Emmerick, *Zambasta*, p. vii.

⁴⁰ Emmerick, *Zambasta*, pp. 343-345.

⁴¹ The terms "Indian" and "Kashmirian" were apparently intended as synonyms by the author of the *Book of Zambasta*. The shift from "in Indian" (*hiṃ-duvau*) to "in Kashmirian" (*kaṣṭārau*) was probably made for poetic reasons; the latter term not only offers terminological variety, but also provides an interesting alliteration with the expression *khaṣṣa-phaṣṣā* occurring in the same section.

⁴² Two Sogdian Buddhist texts may be translations from languages other than Chinese. The so-called "Sūtra of the Condemnation of Intoxicating Drink" claims in its colophon to be based on an Indian original, but shows what has been described as "heavy Chinese influence, to say the least"; see Werner Sunderman, "First Results of Cooperative Work Between Ryukoku University and the Academy of Sciences of the GDR on Buddhist Sogdian Turfan Texts," *The Annual of the Institute of Buddhist Cultural Studies, Ryūkoku University*, no. 12 (1989), pp. 12-18, esp. p. 14. The other, a fragment of an as yet unidentified text which according to its colophon was translated from Kuchean (*'kucyk*, i.e., Tokharian B), is more likely to be a genuinely non-Chinese based translation; see W. B. Henning, *Sogdica* (London, 1940), pp. 59-62.

TOD UND AUFERSTEHUNG DER ANTIKEN RELIGIONEN*

B. HARTMANN

Das vierte nachchristliche Jahrhundert war sowohl für das Christentum als auch für die antiken¹ Religionen von entscheidender Bedeutung und für beide schicksalshaft.

Am 24. Februar 303 proklamierten Kaiser Diokletian² und Cäsar Galerius³ zu Nikomedien ein Edikt, das die schwerste Verfolgung der Christen einläutete und in Bewegung setzte. Sie haben befohlen, dass die Kirchen überall bis auf die Fundamente abzubauen seien. Die christlichen Schriften sollten verbrannt werden. Christliche Würdenträger verwirken ihre Freiheit, wenn sie sich nicht entschliessen, den christlichen Glauben abzuschwören. Christen wurden gemartert und getötet.

Acht Jahre später 311 hat derselbe Galerius als Kaiser mit einem neuen Edikt die Verfolgung beendet und für Christen Toleranz und Religionsfreiheit verkündet. Dies ist das erste Toleranzedikt und lautet im Kern, wie folgt:

Unter den übrigen Verordnungen, die wir zum Wohl und Nutzen des Staates erlassen, haben wir seinerzeit den Willen bekundet, alle Verhältnisse entsprechend den alten Gesetzen und den römischen staatlichen Grundsätzen zu ordnen und dafür zu sorgen, dass auch die Christen, die die Religion⁴ ihrer Vorfahren verlassen, wieder zu einem besseren Entschluss kämen. Aus irgendwelchem Grunde hatte sie solcher Eigenwille erfasst und solche Torheit befallen, dass sie nicht mehr den Bräuchen der Alten folgten, die vielleicht sogar ihre eigenen Vorfahren dereinst eingeführt, sondern nach eigenem Gutdünken so, wie jeder wollte, sich selbst Gesetze machten und sich an diese hielten und da und dort bunte Menschenmengen versammelten. Als nun durch uns ein Erlass erging, der sie zu den von den Vorfahren festgelegten Sitten zurückführen sollte, wurde sehr vielen der Prozess gemacht, und sehr viele gerieten in Verwirrung und erlitten auf mannigfache Weise den Tod. Und da wir sahen, dass die meisten bei ihrer Torheit beharren und weder den himmlischen Göttern die schuldige Verehrung erweisen noch den Gott der Christen verehren,⁵

so haben wir geglaubt, mit Rücksicht auf unsere Menschenfreundlichkeit⁶ und unsere ständige Gewohnheit, gemäss der wir allen Menschen Nachsicht zu schenken pflegen, auch auf diesen Fall bereitwilligst unser Entgegenkommen ausdehnen zu müssen. Sie sollen also wiederum Christen sein⁷ und ihre Häuser, in denen sie sich versammelten, wiederherstellen, jedoch unter der Bedingung, dass sie in keiner Weise gegen die Ordnung handeln.⁸ In einem weiteren Schreiben werden wir den Richtern Weisung geben, wie sie sich zu verhalten haben. In Ansehung dieses unseres Gnaden-erlasses sollen sie daher zu ihrem Gott für unser Wohlergehen, für das des Staates und ihr eigenes flehen, damit das Staatswesen in jeder Beziehung unversehrt bleibe und sie sorgenlos in ihren Wohnungen leben können.^{9,10}

Einige Bemerkungen zu diesem Edikt:

1. Die Verfolgung, die früher durch Galerius entfesselt worden ist, wird beendet.
2. Die Christen bekommen unmissverständlich das Recht und die Möglichkeit ihre Religion auszuüben und Kirchen zu bauen. Das Christentum ist jetzt eine *religio licita*.
3. Aber Galerius weiss auch, dass Toleranz nicht *sec* proklamiert werden kann. Sie ist nur unter einer Bedingung möglich nämlich, dass die Christen nichts gegen die Ordnung — *disciplina* — des Staates unternehmen und sich ihr unterordnen. Es ist bemerkenswert, dass Galerius dieses Edikt in völliger geistiger Klarheit und gut überlegt verfasst hat. Toleranz ist ein Gut, das von beiden Seiten kommen und anerkannt werden muss.
4. Sicher ist es für Galerius als Polytheist kein Problem den Gott der Christen in sein eigenes Pantheon aufzunehmen und anzuerkennen. Er bittet die Christen darum auch, ihren Gott um Fürbitte anzuflehen für ihn, Galerius, für den Römischen Staat und die Christenheit. Er verbindet also auf diese Weise das Wohl von ihm selbst mit dem des Staates und der Christenheit.
5. Es ist aber auch interessant und bemerkenswert, dass er nichts über den Kaiserkult¹¹ sagt, der vorher immer ein so grosses Problem, ja der Stein des Anstosses gewesen war. Leider sind die römischen Kaiser nicht bei den Altmeistern der Theologie, den alten Aegyptern, zu Rate gegangen, als sie den Kaiserkult eingeführt hatten. Die Kaiser erwarteten die göttliche Verehrung für

sich selbst, während in Aegypten nur die Statue¹² des Pharao verehrt wurde.

Den Grund für die Proklamation des Toleranzediktes von Galerius kennen wir nicht. Er hat aber auf seinem Sterbebett¹³ mit der grossen Klarheit und Weisheit eines Reformers der alten Religionspolitik des Römischen Reiches gegenüber den Christen valet gesagt und ihr eine neue Wendung gegeben. Er hat ein neues Zeitalter eingeläutet.

Die Ehre aber als erster römischer Kaiser, der den Christen Religionsfreiheit geschenkt hatte, konnte Galerius bis heute nicht geniessen. Ein anderer Kaiser, Konstantin der Grosse,¹⁴ hat ihm den Lorbeerkranz gestohlen. Denn noch jetzt wird, basierend auf dem abschätzigen Urteil seines Zeitgenossen Euseb,¹⁵ dem ersten Kirchenhistoriker, nur sein Nachfolger Konstantin gepriesen und von ihm als Verkünder seines Toleranzediktes von 313 gesprochen, dieses Toleranzedikt, das auch allen, den Christen und Altgläubigen die freie Wahl für ihren Glauben garantierte. Und doch hat sich Galerius vom Verfolger zum Befreier der Christen gewandelt, eine ähnliche Wandlung wie Paulus durchgemacht, mit dem Unterschied, dass Galerius dem alten Glauben treu geblieben ist. Er hat sogar mit David etwas gemeinsam. Wie dieser war er in seiner Jugend als Sohn eines Bauern Viehhirte. Ist es nun aber so, dass niemand des Galerius, des Initiators des neuen Zeitalters der Religionsfreiheit gedenken würde! Glücklicherweise ist dem nicht so. Es gibt ein Volk unter allen Völkern, das seit langem bis auf den heutigen Tag, zwar wohl unbewusst, einmal per Jahr des ersten Toleranzediktes, nämlich des des Kaisers Galerius gedenkt und dieses Volk ist das niederländische Volk; denn am Königinntag, d.h. am 30. April 311 hat Galerius sein Edikt zu Nikomedien promulgieren lassen. Ich als Gastarbeiter hier in Leiden kann dieses als Abschiedsgeschenk anbieten und es ist mir eine grosse Freude, Holland als erster zu dieser Ehre Glück zu wünschen.

Nach diesem Edikt lebten die Christen und Altgläubigen in mehr oder weniger Ausgewogenheit¹⁶ beieinander bis zu jenem schwarzen Tag, dem 28. Februar 380. Damals haben Kaiser Theodosius I. und seine Mitkaiser Gratianus und Valentinianus II. ein Edikt proklamiert, das der Weltgeschichte wieder eine ganz andere Richtung gegeben hat. Der in unserem Zusammenhang wichtige Passus lautet, wie folgt:

Es ist unser Wille, dass alle Völker, die unter unsere milde und nachsichtige Herrschaft fallen, die Religion annehmen, die der erhabene Apostel Petrus den Römern überliefert hat und auf solche Weise als Religion, durch ihn eingeführt, bis heute verkündet wird. Dieser Religion, das steht fest, schliesst sich auch der Pontifex Damasus sowie Petrus, der Bischof von Alexandrien, ein Mann von apostolischer Heiligkeit an. Wir meinen damit, dass wir nach dem apostolischen Grundsatz und der evangelischen Lehre glauben an eine einzige Gottheit des Vaters und des Sohnes und des heiligen Geistes unter dem Aspekt von gleicher Majestät und heiliger Dreieinheit. Wir befahlen, dass diejenigen, die dieser Vorschrift Folge leisten, den Namen von katholischen Christen führen. Alle ändern aber, die wir für schwachsinig und wahnsinnig erklären, sollen bleibend die Schmach ketzerischer Lehre tragen. Ihre Versammlungshäuser dürfen nicht Kirchen genannt werden. Sie soll in erster Instanz die göttliche Rache treffen und hinterher auch die Strafe, aus unserer Anordnung hervorgehend, die wir auf Grund des himmlischen Urteils vollziehen werden.^{17, 18}

Auch hier einige Bemerkungen. Das Edikt befasst sich mit zwei Problemen:

I. Regelung für nichtchristliche Religionen:

Jeder Bürger des Römischen Reiches muss sich zum Christentum bekehren. Die Verehrung der alten Götter wird abgeschafft. Ihre Tempel werden geschlossen. Die Kulte der Altgläubigen verschwinden und zwar in hohem Tempo. 381 wird der Uebergang zum "Heidentum" verboten. 382 wird der Altar der Viktoria aus dem Senatssal entfernt. Der Besitz der Tempel wird konfisziert. 381 schwört der Senat den alten Glauben ab. Gelegentlich kam es auch zu echtem Bilder- und Tempelsturm. Die letzte Erhebung des "Heidentums" fand mit negativem Ausgang 393/394 statt.

Man begreife gut, das Edikt des Theodosius bedeutet für mich das äusserliche Ende meiner geliebten antiken Religionen im Römischen Reich!

II. Innerchristliche Neuregelungen:

Nach innen d.h. innerchristlich bedeutet das Edikt, dass nur noch die christlichen Auffassungen erlaubt sind, die der Zustimmung des Bischofs von Rom, Damasus, und seines alexandrinischen Kollegen, Petrus, — der auch genannt wird, weil er sich dogmatisch auf derselben Linie wie der römische Bischof bewegt hatte — versichert

sind. Alle anderen Meinungen sind Häresie. Ihre Anhänger dürfen sich nicht mehr Christen nennen. Innerhalb der Christenheit besteht seit diesem Edikt eine rechte Lehre, Orthodoxie, ein Eichmass und das ist der Bischof von Rom. Andere Auffassungen sind Heterodoxie und werden nicht mehr geduldet.

III. Zwei weitere Bemerkungen zum Edikt von Theodosius:

1. Der Bischof von Rom, Damasus, wird nicht wie sein alexandrinischer Kollege Petrus mit dem Titel Bischof angesprochen, sondern mit dem Titel Pontifex. Der Titel "Pontifex Maximus"¹⁹ ist der höchste Priestertitel im alten "heidnischen" Rom gewesen. Er ist eine Art Oberinspektor über das gesamte sakrale Geschehen, sogar über den Dienst der Vestalinnen. Augustus, der erste Kaiser liess sich zum "Pontifex Maximus" wählen und später blieb dieser Titel mit der Kaiserwürde verbunden. Gratianus²⁰ hat 379 als erster römischer Kaiser diesen Titel abgelegt.

Damasus wird darum im Edikt nicht ohne Absicht Pontifex genannt, sondern um bewusst die Suprematie des römischen Bischofs zu unterstreichen. Im Laufe der Zeit ist der Titel "Pontifex Maximus" zwar zunächst nur de facto, gegen Ende des 5. Jahrhunderts aber auch de jure zum offiziellen Titel des Papstes geworden.

Also, wenn wir nach einem Eigennamen der Buchstabenfolge PM begegnen, handelt es sich sicher immer um einen Papst oder um einen mir liebwerten Kollegen in Leiden.

2. Sie haben natürlich schon lange begriffen, dass das Edikt von Theodosius die kurze Zeitspanne von Toleranz, durch Galerius eingeläutet, beendet hat. Am Beginn des 4. Jahrhunderts war das Christentum eine "religio illicita", am Ende davon sind die antiken Religionen "religiones illicitae". Das Christentum hat 69 Jahre nötig gehabt, um vom Unterdrückten zum Unterdrücker zu werden. Für uns alle ist dies doch eine traurige Bilanz. Die 69 Jahre waren das goldene Zeitalter des Christentums. Ist es so?

Und doch muss ich für Theodosius noch eine Lanze brechen. Warum hat Galerius so gehandelt und Theodosius so anders? Für Galerius war es mit seinem polytheistischen Hintergrund kein Problem, auch noch den Gott der Christen in sein Pantheon aufzunehmen und zu verehren. Von seinem Glauben her war es für ihn keine Sache, das Toleranzedikt zu proklamieren. Theodosius dage-

gen, der sich anschickte, sich vom alten Glauben zu lösen und sich dem christlichen Monotheismus zu zuwenden — seine Taufe als Christ hat freilich erst einige Monate nach dem Edikt im Herbst 380 stattgefunden — hat als angehender Konvertit die Neigung, streng gegen die alte Religion aufzutreten, vielleicht auch zu seinem eigenen Schutz. Monotheistische Religionen, ob man nun die älteste, die Religion Echnatons, ob Zarathustra, die Israeliten, das Christentum oder den Islam im Auge hat, tut nichts zur Sache, sie sind eben schon von Haus aus toleranz-feindlich.

3. Ein weitere Frage hat das Edikt von Theodosius bei mir geweckt. Wer ist eigentlich der geistige Vater des Ediktes? Bei Galerius habe ich keine Bedenken, sein Edikt ihm selbst zu zuschreiben. Eine verfehlte Politik und die Sorge²¹ um den Staat und seine Bewohner haben ihn den neuen Weg gehen lassen. Aber Theodosius! Er ist offizell noch der alten Religion verpflichtet. Der erste Teil des Ediktes ist aus seiner damaligen geistigen Verfassung als Suchender, ev. Katechumene noch verständlich. Aber der zweite Teil, die Parteinahme für das Nicänum und für Rom gegen die Arianer kann kaum auf eigenem Boden gewachsen sein. Ich will darum die Frage so stellen: ist das edictum Theodosii in der kaiserlichen Kanzlei konzipiert worden oder hat es in der pontifikalen Kanzlei das Licht der Welt erblickt?²²

Gehen wir nun in der Kirchengeschichte einen Schritt weiter. — Man findet es vielleicht etwas merkwürdig, dass die Abschiedsvorlesung eines Religionsgeschichtlers sich soweit mit Kirchengeschichte befasst —. Wir wollen nun zusammen den Weg zum Konzil von Chalkedon beschreiten. Wie schon in Nicäa (325 n. Chr.) stand immer wieder die Christologie zur Debatte. In Nicäa ging es um die Frage nach der οὐσία Christi um sein Wesen oder andersum ist Christus Gott oder Mensch. In Chalkedon stand die φύσις Christi, seine Natur zur Diskussion, deutlicher: wie verhält sich, was die φύσις betrifft der Sohn zum Vater, natürlich der menschengewordene Sohn Gottes. Wie verhält sich das Göttliche zum Menschlichen in Christus. Die antiochenische Schule betonte die menschliche Natur in Christus, die alexandrinische aber die göttliche. Auf dem Konzil zu Chalzedon (451 n. Chr.) wird eine Kompromissformel anerkannt und zum Dogma erhoben und dieser sog. Kompromiss wurde von Papst Leo I. vorgeschlagen und wendete sich gegen

die beiden Aeussersten gegen Antichia und Alexandrien. Dieser Kompromiss ist die Zweinaturenlehre, man kann sie auch dyophysitisch nennen. "Christus ist wahrer Gott und wahrer Mensch", wobei die beiden Naturen unvermischt sind, unwandelbar und untrennbar. Also: Zwei Naturen, aber eine Person.²³

Dies war für die Alexandriner unannehmbar. Sie behaupten, dass Christus aus zwei Naturen vor deren Vereinigung geboren sei, aber nach der Vereinigung nur aus einer Natur bestehe, also monophysitisch genannt. Die Vereinigung der beiden Physeis ist hier wichtig und kulminiert in der einen fleischgewordenen Physis des Logos²⁴ = Christus. Das bedeutet aber nichts anderes als den göttlichen Leib von Christus.

Wie sind nun die Alexandriner oder besser gesagt die ägyptischen Christen zu dieser Auffassung gekommen?

Wir tauchen zur Beantwortung dieser Frage ins 3. Jahrtausend der altägyptischen Geschichte ein und vertiefen uns in die Position des altägyptischen Königs, des Pharao.

1. In der ersten und ältesten Phase ist der Pharao voller Gott. Meist handelt es sich um Horus. Ob es sich um Identität mit Gott handelt oder um eine Inkarnation Gottes, ist nicht auszumachen.²⁵ Dass sich dieser Gott zugleich im Himmel und als Pharao auf Erden befindet, bewegt die Ägypter nicht.

2. Die zweite Phase²⁶ beginnt etwa 2400 v. Chr. Der Pharao ist nicht mehr vollständiger Gott, sondern nur noch Sohn Gottes. Als Vater kommen verschiedene Götter in Betracht, sehr oft aber Re. Der Vater ist also göttlich, die Mutter aber menschlich. Wir haben es also auch in Ägypten mit einem göttlichen Vater und einer menschlichen Mutter wie im Christentum zu tun. Der Sohn ist von Vatersseite Gott, und Muttersseite Mensch.²⁷ So begegnen wir auch hier im alten Ägypten analog zum nicänisch-chalkedonensischen Problem der Frage nach dem Verhältnis des Göttlichen und Menschlichen im Pharao. Natürlich können wir im alten Ägypten, so wie die Quellenlage liegt, keine Berichte über endlose Debatten und Erklärungen zum Thema Gott — Mensch erwarten, sondern wir müssen uns begnügen mit in theologischen Formeln bewahrten Resultaten.

Dank der ausgezeichneten Studie von Hellmut Brunner²⁸ über die Geburt des Gottkönigs kann ich Ihnen eine wichtige Quelle zu

unserem Problem vorlegen. Ich zitiere den ältesten erhaltenen Text (12. Dynastie):

Amon-Re spricht zum König: “Mein geliebter leiblicher Sohn NN! Dein Vater Re hat deine grosse Würde eines Königs von Ober- und Unterägypten gemacht, als er dich eines Leibes mit sich gemacht hat.”²⁹

Der Pharao ist also eines Leibes mit dem Vater. “Ein Leib/Körper”, äg. *ḥꜥw wꜥ*, kann griechisch nichts anderes sein als *μία φύσις σεσαρκωμένη*, was wir oben mit “eine fleischgewordene Physis” übersetzt haben. Auch im alten Aegypten bestand also die Vorstellung von der Monophysis. Wir können noch einen Schritt weiter gehen. Die ägyptische Formel “ein Leib mit dem (göttlichen) Vater” ist nicht nur monophysitisch. Sie entspricht auch der christologischen Mehrheitsentscheidung von Nicäa,³⁰ wo die offizielle Formel lautet: *ὁμοούσιος τῷ πατρὶ* = (Christus ist) wesenseins mit dem Vater, also eine volle Gottheit. Wenn wir die ganze ägyptische Formel in Betracht ziehen: “ein Leib mit dem Vater”, so haben wir eine Entsprechung zur nicänischen Formel *ὁμοούσιος τῷ πατρὶ*, ein ägyptischer Vorläufer des Nicänums. Wenn wir aber nur die ersten zwei Wörter “ein Leib” in Betracht ziehen, haben wir einen Vorläufer der unterlegenen, monophysitischen Formel von Chalkedon.

Die von Brunner genannten bis jetzt bekannten acht Beispiele der Formel “ein Leib mit dem Vater” sind über eine grosse Zeitspanne verbreitet, nämlich von der 12. bis zu der 19. Dynastie, d.h. von etwa 1900 bis 1200 v. Chr.

Ein weiteres interessantes Detail ist dieses, dass von Amenophis III. an die Mutter des Pharao nicht mehr eine menschliche Frau ist sondern wieder eine Göttin. So ist der alte Zustand der 1. Phase wiederhergestellt, nämlich dass der Pharao ein voller Gott ist.

Die ägyptische Ueberlieferung ist bruchstückartig und darum ist es nicht möglich, die Ueberlieferungskette bis Chalkedon aufzuzeigen; aber die Ägypter sind konservativ und bewahren just am Ende in Formeln alles, was einmal war.³¹ Darum kann ich es wohl zu postulieren wagen, dass es nicht erstaunlich sei, dass gerade die monophysitische Theologie und Auffassung vom Problem “Christus-Gott-Mensch” sein Epizentrum in Aegypten hatte, ja

dass diese Theologie in der Tat ihre Wurzeln in der altägyptischen Religion hat. Es ist ferner interessant, dass für das eine und andere die Anhänger in Aegypten zu finden sind. Das Nicänum und der Monophysitismus können beide als Geschenk des alten Aegypten an das Christentum betrachtet werden, allerdings das zweite, was den römischen Kanon betrifft, nicht als ein gewünschtes Geschenk.

Was ist nun die Reaktion der Chalkedonenser, der Befürworter von "vere Deus, vere homo" d.h. des Kaisers und von Rom auf die Monophysie? Das Edikt des Theodosius ist auch in dieser Situation angewendet worden. Hätten wir etwas anderes erwartet? Die Monophysiten werden durch die Chalkedonenser verfolgt ja selbst durch ihren eigenen Kaiser, — Aegypten gehörte damals zum byzantinischen Reich —. Der Kaiser unternahm zwar verschiedene Versuche, um mit monotheletischen oder monergetischen Kompromisformeln die Monophysiten wieder in die Reichskirche zurückzuführen; aber die eine Lösung wird durch Aegypten, die ander durch Rom verworfen. Die Reichskirche ist dadurch entgültig auseinandergebrochen. Die Monophysiten verursachten so das erste bleibende Schisma in der Kirchengeschichte.

641 eroberten die muslimischen Araber Aegypten. Es ist nicht verwunderlich, dass sogar der monophysitische Patriarch dazu beigetragen hatte, dass die Araber die Stadt Alexandrien einnehmen konnte. Monophysiten erwarteten eben von den Muselmanen mehr Toleranz als von ihren byzantinischen Mitchristen. Das Geschehen von 641 in Aegypten ist eine bittere Frucht des Ediktes von Theodosius.

Es wäre die Mühe wert, einmal die Kirchengeschichte von Theodosius bis heute zu schreiben fussend auf seinem Edikt. Aber es würde wohl eine traurige Märe werden und eigentlich ist es so, dass nur eine "wirkliche"³² Oekumene im Stande wäre, dieser Kette von Unglück ein Ende zu setzen.

Kehren wir noch einmal zurück in unsere Jugend zu den Lateinstunden auf dem Gymnasium. Dort haben wir ja das eine und andere aus der reich dokumentierten römischen Religion gelernt. Auch wenn wir alles vergessen hätten, können wir uns vielleicht noch an den Namen Juppiter³³ erinnern. Er ist der Hauptgott des römischen Pantheons und zugleich auch der Staatsgott des Römischen Reiches. Zwei "Epitheta ornantia" oder Ehrentitel kommen

uns vielleicht wieder in den Sinn, nämlich: “optimus”³⁴ und “maximus”. Wenn von Juppiter gesprochen wird, erscheint er oft in der Formel “Juppiter optimus maximus” Juppiter der Mächtigste und Grösste. Diese Art Superlativ deutet darauf hin, dass es auch Götter von minderem Rang und Bedeutung gegeben hat, die weniger mächtig, weniger gross als Juppiter waren. Dies weist also auf eine polytheistische Religion hin.

Nun bin ich auf meinen Spaziergängen und Wanderungen mit offenen Augen durch die schweizerische Landschaft hin der merkwürdigen Abkürzung “D.O.M.” begegnet und ich denke in diesem Fall nicht an die Etikette meines ureigensten Privatlikörs des “Bénédictine”. Nein, ich habe die Buchstabenfolge “D.O.M.” an ganz anderen Orten begegnet und zwar auf Türstürzen von Kirchportalen. Auf solchen Türstürzen steht meist der Name des Kirchenpatrons, z.B. “divo Marco” dem heiligen Markus oder “sanctae Caeciliae” der heiligen Zäzilie, d.h. es handelt sich um Abkürzungen für “(Kirche) dem heiligen Markus, der heiligen Zäzilie (geweiht)”. Darum können wir annehmen, dass D.O.M., auch den Namen des Kirchenpatrons angibt: “(Kirche) dem/der D.O.M. (geweiht)”. Was bedeutet nun D.O.M. Glücklicherweise habe ich auch Kirchen gefunden, deren Erbauer das ganze Baugeld nicht schon vor Abschluss des Baus aufgebraucht hatten, und somit der Bildhauer die Dedikation ohne Abkürzungen im Klartext in den Stein meisseln konnte. So lesen wir nun: “Deo Optimo Maximo”. Das bedeutet: “(Kirche) Gott, dem mächtigsten und grössten (geweiht)”. Mit Gott kann hier nichts anderes als Gott-Vater gemeint sein, weil in solchen Fällen der Sohn nie Gott genannt wird, sondern mit dem Wort Christus oder mit einem seiner Epitheta, etwa Soter, Triumphator bezeichnet wird. Aber nun Deus, der Mächtigste der Grösste? Haben wir nicht eben gesehen und gelernt, dass das eine polytheistische Formel sei? “D.O.M.” ist eigentlich peinlich als Aufschrift für eine Kirche. Aber ja, nicht nur in dieser Formel sondern auch in der Kunstgeschichte, wenn es z.B. um Abbildungen der Trinität³⁵ geht, wird es deutlich, dass der Vater höher steht als die beiden anderen Personen der Trinität. Hier merkt man wenig von dem, was im Edictum Theodosii vorgeschrieben wird, wo der christliche Glaube zusammengefasst wird in den Worten “una deitas patris et filii et

spiritus sancti". Wir müssen also annehmen, dass trotz Theodosius neben dem Monotheismus aus polytheistische Züge im Christentum wahrzunehmen sind. Und wenn die Worte "Deo Optimo Maximo" auf dem Türsturz eines Kirchenportals stehen, kann es ja nicht in der Rubrik "Volks Glaube" untergebracht und damit als quantité négligeable unschädlich gemacht werden.

Aber ja, man halte es mir zugut, dass ich in den letzten 24 Jahren meist mit polytheistischen Religionen beschäftigt gewesen und damit für mich auch zum Schluss beschäftigt gewesen und damit für mich auch zum Schluss gekommen bin, dass Polytheismus und Monotheismus nur die beiden Facetten derselben Medaille sind: zwei Formen von Frömmigkeit und Glauben an das Göttliche, dass sie darum nicht gegeneinander stehen, sondern gemeinsam gegenüber dem Atheismus.

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* Der Text entspricht im wesentlichen meiner Abschiedsvorlesung als Ordinarius, gehalten zu Leiden am 19. Juni 1987.

¹ Antik steht im Gegensatz zu modern (= lebend). Manchmal werden die antiken Religionen auch tote genannt. Sie umfassen alle Religionen, die nur noch historisch erfassbar sind.

² *Der Kleine Pauly*, Lexikon der Antike (= *Kl. Pauly*), Stuttgart, München I-V, 1964-75: II, 36-39.

³ *Kl. Pauly* III, 1108ff.

⁴ αἵρεσις = secta.

⁵ Christianorum deum observare.

⁶ Clementia.

⁷ Ut denuo sint christiani.

⁸ Ut ne quid contra disciplinam agent.

⁹ Unde juxta hanc indulgentiam nostram debebunt deum suum orare pro salute nostra et rei publicae ac sua, ut undique uersum res publica perstet incolomis et securi uiuere in sedibus suis possint.

¹⁰ Gr. Text: Eusebius, *Kirchengeschichte*, herausg. v. Eduard Schwartz, Leipzig (kleine Ausgabe) 41932, 338ff.

Lat. Text: Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* (Sources chrétiennes 39, Paris 1954) 117f.

¹¹ *Kl. Pauly* II, 1110ff.

¹² Lexikon der Ägyptologie, herausg. v. W. Helck, E. Otto und W. Westendorf, Wiesbaden 1972-89 (= *LA*) III 533-34.

¹³ Gestorben Anfang Mai 311 in Serdica (= Sophia in Bulgarien).

¹⁴ *Kl. Pauly* I, 1286-89.

¹⁵ Eusebius, Bischof von Caesarea (in Palästina) ca. 260-340, *Kl. Pauly* II, 459f.

¹⁶ Für eine schwere Erschütterung des Zusammenlebens und eine Verunsicherung der Christen sorgte Kaiser Julian (*331, Kaiser 361-363), der wieder zur alten Religion zurückkehrte und versuchte, dem alten "Heidentum" zum Sieg zu verhelfen. Darum bekommt er auch das Epitheton "apostata". *Kl. Pauly* II, 1515ff.

¹⁷ Cunctos populos, quos clementiae nostrae regit temperamentum, in tali volumus religioni versari, quam divinum Petrum apostolum tradidisse Romanis religio usque nunc ab ipso insinuata declarat, quamque pontificem Damasum sequi claret, et Petrum, Alexandriae episcopum, virum apostolicae sanctitatis: hoc est ut secundum apostolicam disciplinam evangelicamque doctrinam patris et filii et spiritus sancti unam deitatem sub parili maiestate et sub pia trinitate credamus. § 1. Hanc legen sequentes Christianorum catholicorum nomen iubemus amplecti, reliquos vero dementes vesanosque iudicantes, haeretici dogmatis infamiam sustinere nec conciliabula eorum ecclesiarum nomen accipere, divina primum vindicta, post etiam motus nostri, quem ex coelesti arbitrio sumpserimus, utione plectendos.

¹⁸ Text bei C. Mirbt, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papsttums und des römischen Katholizismus*, Tübingen 1934, Nr. 134, pag. 56.

¹⁹ *Kl. Pauly* IV, 1046ff.

²⁰ *Kl. Pauly* II, 870f.

²¹ Beide, Galerius und Theodosius berufen sich auf ihre "clementia". Bei Galerius ist sie echt. Sein Edikt atmet diesen Geist der Milde und Sorge um seine Untertanen. Bei Theodosius ist es reine Formel. Sein Edikt wirkt kalt, hart, berechnend.

²² Welche Rolle spielt Ambrosius, der berühmte Bischof von Mailand, der aus seiner Funktion als consularis Liguriae et Aemiliae 374 von den Nicänern und den Arianern zum Bischof erkoren wurde? Seine Beziehungen zu Theodosius waren sehr eng und doch hat Ambrosius den Kaiser zu einem Primeur gezwungen. Er nötigt den Kaiser nach der Ermordung des Butherich, weil er einen brutalen Vergeltungsbefehl nicht rechtzeitig zurückgenommen hatte, an Weihnachten 390 öffentlich Busse zu tun. *Kl. Pauly* I, 296f und V, 700ff. Ambrosius war nicht nur ein scharfer Verfolger der Altgläubigen (cf. Edikt 1. Teil) sondern auch der Arianer (cf. Edikt 2. Teil). Ambrosius musste sich übrigens nach seiner Wahl zum Bischof erst noch taufen lassen (sic!). Zur Entstehung des Ediktes, die kontrovers ist, vergleiche auch A. Lippold, *Theodosius der Grosse und seine Zeit*, Urban Bücher 107, Stuttgart, 1968, 18f.

²³ Cf. Walter Koehler, *Dogmengeschichte*, Zürich-Leipzig, 1943, 158-66, bes. 163

²⁴ μία φύσις τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη. Alois Grillmeier, *Jesus Christus im Glauben der Kirche*, Freiburg, I, 1982, 674.

²⁵ S. Morenz, *Ägyptische Religion*, Stuttgart, 1960, 35ff. *LÄ* III, 462ff.

²⁶ Morenz 36ff.

²⁷ "Es ist die Frau eines Priesters des Gottes Re, die mit drei Kindern des Re schwanger geht. Er hat zu ihr gesagt, dass sie dieses herrliche (Königs-) Amt im ganzen Land ausüben werden". cf. A. Erman — H. Ranke, *Aegypten und ägyptisches Leben im Altertum*, Tübingen, 1923, 436.

²⁸ H. Brunner, *Die Geburt des Gottkönigs*, Studien zur Überlieferung eines altägyptischen Mythos, Ägyptologische Abhandlungen Bd. 10, Wiesbaden 1986, 64-66 und 226.

²⁹ Brunner 65.

³⁰ Koehler 165.

³¹ In der klassischen fünfgliedrigen Titulatur des Pharaos stehen die beiden obgenannten Phasen, die sich eigentlich ausschliessen, friedlich nebeneinander, ohne dass das jemanden stört. Morenz 36⁸³ und H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, Chicago 1948, Abb. 20, Kartusche. cf. S. Morenz, *Die Begegnung Europas mit Ägypten*, Zürich, 1969, passim. Cf. dazu auch E. Brunner-Traut, *Gelebte Mythen*, Beiträge zum altägyptischen Mythos, Darmstadt, ³1988, 31-59, bes. 52f.

³² Wobei die römisch-katholische Kirche als Vollmitglied mitmachen würde und nicht nur als Beobachter. Aber das würde die Aufgabe des Theodosius-Ediktes, 2. Teil, bedeuten, der Pontifex Maximus nicht mehr als Arbiter und Monarch, sondern in gleicher Position wie die anderen christlichen Kirchen, das Ende des römischen Eichmasses. Das wird allerdings noch auf sich warten lassen.

³³ *Kl. Pauly* III, 1-6.

³⁴ Von "ops" hilfreiche Macht, *Kl. Pauly* III, 5.

³⁵ Cf. den sog. Gnadenstuhl.

MERKABAH MYSTICISM

*A Critical Review**

RACHEL ELIOR

The awesome celestial vision described in the opening chapter of the Book of Ezekiel is known in Jewish tradition as the 'Vision of the Heavenly Chariot' or as the 'Vision of the Merkabah'.¹ Ezekiel's detailed, first person account of the heavenly throne was the subject of extensive exegetical tradition, homilistic elaboration, and mystical speculation throughout late Jewish antiquity.

The mysteries of the throne which were alluded to in the vision of the Chariot and the manner in which they were interpreted by generations of sages and rabbis through the centuries, are the subjects of David Halperin's comprehensive study—"The Faces of the Chariot".²

Halperin explores the divergent interpretive traditions which reflect the sacred significance that was ascribed in early sources to the enigmatic Vision of the Chariot. He examines the extraordinary rabbinic position which prohibited popular study of the Merkabah and restricted detailed explanation of these traditions while attempting to decipher the underlying reasons for this attitude.³

Halperin's book is divided into nine major chapters, each subdivided methodologically into related subsections; it also contains seven appendices, and an extensive reference list arranged respectively according to subjects, and six detailed indexes.

Chapter I presents the early expositions of the Merkabah and includes the traditional Mishnaic prohibitions against the study of this material (Mish. Hagigah 2:1, Mish. Megillah 4:10). The chapter continues with the Pardes episode in both Palestinian and Babylonian versions and elaborates the manner in which the Merkabah maintains its position against Mishnaic opposition.

The beginnings of Merkabah interpretation are introduced in Chapter II and include the Biblical Ezekiel narration, the relevant Qumran Texts, and parallel Septuagint sources.

Halperin follows with a chapter on the Merkabah and its relation to various apocalyptic works including the Book of Enoch, the Book of Revelations, the Book of Daniel, and others.

Chapter IV offers an interpretation of the synagogue Merkabah tradition as inferred from the Targum to Ezekiel. He compares Genesis Rabbah 65:21, Pesiqta de-Rab Kahanah, Ba-Hodesh 22 and its parallels. He reconstructs these sources as the paradigm for the synagogue Merkabah tradition.

Chapter V deals with the different interpretive traditions concerning the Merkabah and the calf at Mount Sinai and includes an analysis of Leviticus Rabbah 27:3, Mekhilta to Exodus 14:29, Exodus Rabbah 43:8, Midrash to Psalm 5:8, and other sources.

Chapter VI refers back to the Pardes episode and to the forbidden utterance of "Water-Water". It also includes the role of heavenly waters in different traditions.

Chapter VII introduces the concept of the Rainbow as both the image and the glory of God. Halperin defines the role of the rainbow in the Merkabah.

Chapter VIII innovatively suggests a connection between the 'Shabu'ot Cycle'—the Merkabah expositions delivered on Shabu'ot at public meetings in third century Palestine and the 'Visions of Ezekiel'. It includes parallel sources such as the 'Ascension of Moses' as described in Pesikta Rabbati and the Homilies of Joshua ben Levi. The homily of Origen on Ezekiel is considered and analysed. Halperin purports that Origen probably was aware of the Jewish stories of the Ascension of Moses and their connection to Ezekiel's Merkabah—a suggestive dating point for this tradition.

Chapter IX surveys the Merkabah and the Hekhalot, introduces the Hekhalot texts and claims that 'Sar Torah' was the key text. Halperin reviews the Merkabah exegesis of the Hekhalot and compares it with the Targumic tradition. He elaborates upon the relations between the Hekhalot and the Shabu'ot cycle. Special attention is devoted to an analogy between Moses, the hero of the Shabu'ot cycle, and Metatron, the Hekhalot hero. In this chapter, Halperin introduces his solution for the riddle of the Hekhalot, utilizing psychological insight, socio-historic reconstruction and new perceptions of this literature.

Halperin has arranged all the intricacies of this variegated mate-

rial with striking methodological care, in a lucid presentation, extensively detailed and documented, and he has widened the base for future study of the Hekhalot and Merkabah traditions.

II

The diverse interpretations for the Vision of the Merkabah, the inner significance of the esotericism involved in its study, and the link with the mystical tradition as well as the great apprehension surrounding these sources, were all extensively elaborated by the late G. Scholem in his pioneering studies—"Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism" and in "Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition".⁴ These subjects were further discussed by E.E. Urbach, M. Smith, I. Gruenwald, J. Dan, I. Chernus, and other.⁵

Scholem contended that the singular position occupied by the study of the Merkabah—expounding the Chariot—must indicate mystical experience well exceeding mere interpretation of the Book of Ezekiel. He maintained that the grave rabbinic restrictions concerning the Merkabah relate to actual mystical practice which involved contemplative ascent to the divine realm and reflection upon the celestial chariot and its attendant beings. The experience of these mystics has been preserved in those related texts which have become known as the 'Hekhalot' (heavenly halls or celestial palaces) Literature and the Merkabah tradition.⁶

The Hekhalot is an anonymous corpus of enigmatic writings composed largely in Hebrew, with some few Aramaic units. These heterogeneous writings are attributed to a period covering the 2nd until the 5th-6th centuries A.D. and have been preserved in certain medieval manuscripts as well as in some fragments found in the Cairo Genizah. The Hekhalot literature does not contain any inherent evidence distinctly fixing its date of origin; likewise it does not offer an obvious testimony relating to the socio-historical background of those concepts and the ideas expressed in it. Consequently, the chronological and historical sources as well as the religious orientation of the circles which generated the Hekhalot traditions remain undefined and indistinct.⁷

Scholem inferred that while the Hekhalot literature has preserved

the mystic account of the heavenly ascension, the rabbinic representation as found in Mishna Hagigah 2:1, its different recensions and related traditions in both the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmudim, has preserved the parallel prohibitory restrictions to this practice while suppressing its content.

Scholem followed the line of thought first suggested in the 11th century Gaonic Responsa, connecting the Merkabah, the Mishna, and the Hekhalot.⁸ Scholem disagreed with accepted 19th century scholarship which dated these texts to the post-Talmudic period, and offered an early dating for the Hekhalot, placing it firmly in the late Mishnaic period. He founded this opinion upon intertextual connections suggested by the apocalyptic ascensions, the rabbinic allusions, the Vision of Ezekiel as found in the Hekhalot and Merkabah traditions, as well as parallel Christian sources such as Paul's account in II Corinthians 12:2-4 and Origen's testimony.⁹

Scholem was inclined to perceive these sources as a homogeneous expression of Merkabah mysticism and as the continuation of a singular mystic tradition. Halperin disagrees with Scholem's homogeneous perception and assumes instead that there existed not one view of Merkabah mysticism but that there were contending positions from different sources and various times and separate places. He plays down the mystical character of the Merkabah and instead discerns different dimensions which include exegetical tradition and homiletic speculation on Ezekiel's vision.

The author questions Scholem's interpretation of the esoteric nature of the Merkabah exposition as alluding to mystical experience, and attempts to refute the importance Scholem ascribed to the mystical context of Ezekiel's vision in its various expressions¹⁰ claiming that the texts seldom refer to ecstatic journeys.¹¹ "Instead they show clearly that there was something in the text of Ezekiel itself that frightened the Rabbis. They represent the Merkabah as an extraordinary case extraordinarily promising, extraordinarily dangerous". (p. 7).

In order to support his arguments the author draws upon a wide range of sources which elaborate different aspects of Ezekiel's vision: these sources include excerpts from the apocalyptic literature, the Septuagint, the angelic liturgy of Qumran, the Mishna, the Targum, the writings of Origen, the early Midrashim,

and the Hekhalot treatises. These sources are all lucidly introduced and carefully considered in an attempt to unravel the hidden dimensions of the Merkabah and to decipher its concealed context.

Halperin offers three major courses of inquiry in order to elucidate the arcane faces of the chariot. These include:

- 1). The new context in which the Merkabah material was expounded.
- 2). The ambiguous nature and threatening elements which are to be found in the Merkabah.
- 3). The social background that initiated the Hekhalot tradition and the new socio-psychological connotations which could be extrapolated from the Hekhalot literature.

The two first courses which are devoted to the traditional lines of Merkabah exegesis and to the background of its interpretation are presented in commonly accepted methods of study applied to rabbinic exegesis and Midrashic literature, stretched, however, to their very limits. Halperin's previous book—*The Merkabah in Rabbinic Literature* (The American Oriental Society, 1980) introduced these basic contentions in detail and his work has been reviewed and discussed previously,¹² Therefore, this article will touch only briefly on the first two aspects and will concentrate upon the author's new treatment of the Merkabah and the Hekhalot.

I. The first inquiry delves into the presentation of the alternative context in which the interpreters of the Merkabah understood the vision of the chariot. One of the earliest, best documented and attested features of Merkabah tradition, according to Halperin, is its coupling of the vision of Ezekiel I with the book of Exodus account of the Sinai revelation (Ex. 19). The traditional practice of the public reading of these two passages together on the festival of Shabu'ot, the Sinai revelation being the Tora portion and Ezekiel's Merkabah vision being the Haftara for Shabu'ot, firmly established and expressed the perception that they are related to each other, and that each must be understood in the light of the other. The scriptural base for this coupling is to be found in Psalm 68:18 which combines the chariot with Sinai, thereby placing the Merkabah and the Sinai revelation into the same contextual framework. Moreover, the opening of the following verse, Ps. 68:19, introduces the element of a heavenly ascension.

This conceptual perception is reflected in the Septuagint's rendering of Ezekiel 43:2. It is again presupposed in the 'Apocalypse of Abraham' and in the rabbinic traditions of the Merkabah expositions of R. Johanan b. Zakai's disciples. This perception achieves its fullest development in a cycle of third century rabbinic homilies for Shabu'ot ascribed to R. Joshua b. Levi.¹³

Halperin argues that the reading of Exodus 19 and Ezekiel I as two segments of the same event, provides a starting point for the visualization with the 'eyes of the heart' of the full glory of the Sinai revelation, and for the true appreciation of the splendor and the power of the authority that stood behind the Tora.

Halperin maintains that the Hekhalot tradition drew upon the Merkabah exegesis of the synagogue and was inspired, above all, by the Ascension Haggadot of the Shabu'ot cycle and by those parallel elements found in the Targum. He states that it is within the Shabu'ot cycle that may be seen for the first time the combination between the themes of Ezekiel's Merkabah, the heavenly ascension, and the Sinaitic revelation. The Shabu'ot cycle identifies Psalm 68:18-19 as the scriptural inspiration for this linkage. This naturally suggests, says Halperin, that the clue to the genesis of the Hekhalot lies within the Shabu'ot cycle and that the Hekhalot literature reflects the synagogue Merkabah tradition carried to its extreme. The author's treatment of the Hekhalot literature and its relation to the Merkabah is based upon these arguments. This complex perception reflects an interesting development within the exegetic tradition, but does not relate to the Hekhalot tradition since the Hekhalot literature never mentions it and is not linked to any particular Tora lection or to the interpretation of a particular verse. Likewise, it is chronologically autonomous, never connected to a specific time, festival or event.

Underlying Halperin's arguments lies a basic preconception which denies any and all significance to mystical experience as an inspiration for the Hekhalot literature.¹⁴ He apparently perceives these texts as a mere continuation of the exegetical tradition and as a succession in the homiletic speculation which relates to Ezekiel's chariot. However intriguing, this explanation ignores the unique religious qualities, the enigmatic poetic style, the magical invocations and adjurations, and the manifest mystical character so very

prominent in the Hekhalot treatises.¹⁵ These qualities far exceed simple homiletic exposition and defy exegetical tradition. Halperin's considerations can explain neither the grave rabbinic prohibitions nor the sacred distinction and heavenly origin attributed to the Hekhalot literature and the Merkabah hymns.

The second inquiry discusses the ambiguous and intimidating nature of the divine chariot and its fearful aspects which presumably motivated the rabbinic endeavor to suppress popular exposition of the vision of the Merkabah and to remove all vestiges of it from the synagogue.¹⁶

At the crux of the matter lies the appearance of the face of an ox and the foot of a calf within the elements of the divine chariot: Ezekiel saw the *Hayyot* with "an ox's face on the left for all four of them" (Ez. I:10) and with feet "like the sole of a calf" (I:7). The Biblical narrative of Exodus 32 describes the Israelite worship of the golden calf and Psalm 106:20 refers back to this episode, of which the rabbis said that 'they exchanged their glory for the likeness of an ox'. Due to the appearance in Ezekiel's vision of the ox's face and the calf's foot, the Merkabah vision could be and was drawn into the circle of ideas that surrounded the Exodus calf episode. Several chapters in the Midrashic tradition appear to suggest that the golden calf apostasy in the desert was the ox of the Merkabah.¹⁷

The Midrashic tradition sheds light upon the background of the calf apostasy by alluding to the paradoxical connection between the ox's face and the calf's foot appearing in Ezekiel's chariot and the divine revelation of the chariots at the Red Sea (Ex. 14).

The author emphasizes the complex association between the revelation of the divine chariot at the Red Sea, the making of the golden calf at Sinai, the face of the ox in Ezekiel's chariot, and the worship of the celestial ox as the fundamental cause for the fearful aspects of the chariot and the reason for its suppression.¹⁸

The contention which emerges from this exposition is that the "calf event" at Sinai was inspired by the sight of the heavenly ox, which was revealed to the Israelites at the crossing of the Red Sea, and in turn, was revealed to Ezekiel. In other words, the Israelites turned to worship the golden calf not *in spite* of the divine revelation, but *because* of it.

This understanding of the Merkabah and the calf is found mainly

in late midrashim, but many earlier dated sources, perhaps even going back to the interpolated Ezekiel 10:14 and the Septuagint translation of Ezekiel 1:7, can be held to presuppose it, if only because these sources evidently attempt to suppress it. The author of Ezekiel 10:14 replaced the ox's face with the face of a cherub in this second account of the Merkabah, and the Qumran Ezekiel fragment of verse 1:10 replaces the ox with a calf's face¹⁹—these would account for the controversial nature of the presence of the ox and the calf in the chariot. Halperin argues that these passages from Ezekiel reinforced the suggestion of Exodus 32:24, that the calf possessed an inherent, eerie, and compelling power of its own. Likewise, they gave a base for the interpretation of the clue needed to trace this power back to the divinity.²⁰

Similar ambiguities are attached to the "terrible ice" of Ezekiel I:22. Apocalyptic sources associated this feature of the vision with the heavenly waters, with the Red Sea, with the primordial monster-begetting waters, or with some combination of all three. It should be noted that an interesting parallel association may be found in the book of Revelations.²¹ Halperin claims that the Babylonian rabbinic tradition echoed these conceptions in its warning against uttering "water-water" in the divine realm (*Hagigah* 2). Halperin further argues that underlying all these images is the ancient conception of water as an embodiment of chaos which engulfs God even as He masters it. The Merkabah water theme runs parallel to the Merkabah calf theme. Some Midrashic sources aptly underline this analogy by rooting the Israelite calf worship in the experience at the Red Sea. The *Hekhalot* too imply that those who perceive water in God's presence must therefore be descended from those who worshipped the calf.

Halperin's interesting and intriguing alternative solution to the riddle of the calf and to the prohibition of the Merkabah exposition, follows a basic postulate stating that religious culture may be studied through both its repressed impulses as through an analysis of the reasons that led to a sense of obligation to repress them. Halperin's apparent aim is to proffer an alternative understanding of an interpretive character for the rabbinic prohibition concerning the exposition of the Merkabah. He ascribes a tremendous power to exegetical traditions and homiletic associations capable of pro-

hibiting and repressing the exposition and study of the Merkabah and associated biblical texts.

In lieu of the traditional mystic understanding propounded by Hai Gaon and the mystical experience reflected in these sources, Halperin perceives suppressed exegetical tradition depleted of all mystical connotation. He focuses upon certain specific lines and fragments of verses, often removed from their proper context, and thereby fails to perceive the overwhelming esoteric content and spiritual experience with which these texts are imbued.

III

Halperin's third inquiry questions the threefold relationship between the traditional ones of Merkabah exegesis, the rabbinic esoteric perception of Ma'aseh Merkabah, and the Hekhalot conception of the heavenly ascension. His new approach to the Hekhalot literature, contests all hitherto accepted views.

In the last decade, the Hekhalot Literature has attracted widespread attention and renewed scholarly interest. These studies have concentrated upon the inherent methodological problems of this material and focused upon their resultant historical and phenomenological ramifications. Modern scholarship has re-defined the problem of the position of the Hekhalot literature in the development of ancient Judaism by attempting to trace the intricate and complex historical and philological connections with Talmudic literature, the Judean Desert writings, the literature of Early Christianity, and various gnostic trends.²² As a result, it has also begun to elucidate the obscurity regarding the emergence of this literature, to question the historical background, and to explore the ambiguities involved in the textual and redactional problems. Although the most diverse opinions have been expressed on all these subjects, the fundamentally mystical character of the texts, their magical worldview, and their numinous reverence directed towards the divine realm, have never been challenged or disputed.

The Hekhalot literature is marked by a dramatic shift in focus from terrestrial matters and mundane concerns to celestial realms and mystic concerns. This literature abandons exegetic and homiletic tradition in favour of a unique style founded on heavenly

testimonies, magical incantations, and mystical experience.²³ In fact, the Hekhalot treatises are composed of angelic hymns of exaltation, magical incantations and mystical invocations, lists of obscure divine names, terrifying descriptions of ecstatic conversions, testimonies concerning the heavenly throne of glory, cryptic occult procedures, and awesome accounts of the splendor of an anthropomorphic deity.²⁴ This literature vividly portrays the mystic ascent to heaven, paradoxically known as the 'Descent to the Chariot' (*Yeridah la Merkabah*). It explains the ascetic practices and magic formulae without which the elect few cannot utter the adjurations and attempt the *Himmelsreise der Seele*. It discusses the magnificence of the heavenly realm and describes the rapturous experiences of the visionaries with detailed and picturesque accounts of the heavenly beings, celestial princes, and the awesome angelic retinue.²⁵

Heavenly ascents are ubiquitous in the literature of late antiquity and magical texts expressing cognate ideas and practices may be found throughout the Greek magical and theurgical literature. The general conceptual apparatus of the Hekhalot literature may thus be easily placed within the context of Late Antiquity. In certain areas, the Hekhalot and pagan magic theurgical literature (e.g. talmudic or apocalyptic) have a common denominator which the Hekhalot does not share with other Jewish writings, with the possible exception of *Sefer hā Razim*.

Halperin attempts to refute the conception of the Hekhalot Literature as a religious document centered around the heavenly ascent, and offers a different course of interpretation. He rejects the interpretation of the Hekhalot literature as the literary record of genuine spiritual experience or religious practice, as an esoteric testimony to true mystical insight. Instead, he perceives the Hekhalot Literature as a social manifesto containing revolutionary trends, conceived in the terms of the synagogue tradition and bound in a social struggle for power. In his opinion, this literature utilizes elements of the heavenly ascension and other fragments of the Merkabah ideology, in an attack upon established rabbinic authority, attempting to institute a new religious prerogative and to create a new Torah.²⁶

The arguments for this astounding re-interpretation can be summarised as follows:

- 1). "We are not to look for the originators of the Hekhalot in any esoteric clique but among the Jewish masses" (p. 385) "The Hekhalot are the work of people who had every reason to detest the rabbis and indeed are directed in large measure against the rabbi's status" (p. 442)
- 2). "The Hekhalot are rooted in the Sinai Ascension haggadot which are connected with the popular synagogue tradition of Merkabah interpretation. It is clear that the aspect of the synagogue Merkabah tradition that most caught its audience's imagination was the tale of Moses' ascent to heaven and struggle with the angels over the Torah. These stories inspired a body of literature which we may regard as an offshoot of the synagogue Merkabah exegesis: the Hekhalot", (p. 450). "Certain people nurtured on the stories of how Moses climbed to heaven and seized the Torah from the angels used these images to express and to satisfy their own yearning to have Torah made accessible to them" (p. 385)
- 3). "The authors of the Hekhalot did more than borrow the ascension theme from the synagogue tradition. They made it into a paradigm of their own struggle with the rabbinic elite for a place of honor within Jewish society—an unequal and frustrating struggle which they waged with magic as their chief weapon. In doing so...they brought out certain aspects of the ascension theme which had always been there, in potential, for the ascension myth is inherently and essentially revolutionary. It is very nearly a mirror image of the ancient myth of Lucifer, the rebellious deity who tries to set his throne above the stars and is therefore hurled down to hell. More exactly, it is the Lucifer myth told from the rebel's point of view with the rebel victorious".

"Both I suspect are rooted in the psychological reality of the younger generation challenging the old. The difference lies in the sympathies of the narrator." (p. 450-51). Halperin considers the link between the exaltation of the human being and the degradation of the heavenly beings as the core of the revolutionary significance of the ascension myth underlying a myth which expresses a "human invasion of heaven." (p. 453). He further suggests that this myth and its significance are rooted in the endlessly repeated conflict of generations.

4). "The theme of struggle between angels and humans is a reflection of a real issue between different groups of humans. The angels appear as spokesmen for a privileged group whose claim to privilege rests on mastery of the Torah." (p. 437) "The struggle over the Torah masks a struggle over the power and status that Torah confers and symbolizes" (p. 444). "Heavenly ascension then, is both a precondition as a metaphor for the acquisition of Torah and with the status and power that the believer craves." (p. 441) "The Hekhalot writers transformed the ascension stories into a revolutionary manifesto." (p. 443)

The author postulates that the sharp social conflict occurring in the attempt to wrest power from established religious authority, influenced the Hekhalot writers and is disguised within the Merkabah mythology portraying humans struggling upwards against a hostile celestial hierarchy.

This far-reaching innovative socio-historical reconstruction combines daring psychological insight and social motivation in an attempt to decipher these cryptic texts. Conflict between competing social classes is combined with psychological complexities between generations. But the attempt raises a cardinal issue regarding the approach of modern research to ancient literature. The responsibility and hermeneutic limitation of modern research has never been sufficiently defined, especially as regards the spirit in which a text was originally composed, its explicit expression and inherent self-perception and world view, as well as its subsequent traditional perception throughout history, its sacred significance and its socio-religious context within a religious culture.

Halperin's interpretation of the Hekhalot resolutely ignores the literal meaning of this literature and the spirit that imbues it. He repeatedly denies all significance and validity of religious inspiration, he ignores the factuality of mystical ecstasy in a manner that seems to cast doubt upon the authenticity of human yearning towards heaven. This is a characteristic reductionist stance which is unable to accept either genuine religious experience or the potent reality of an autonomous human spiritual urge. Taking this view, it is obviously impossible for any of these factors to generate a literature of genuine religious testimony.

This view, then, recognizes religious phenomena as a mere disguise for alleged stronger and more fundamental human

pressures and social forces. In this perspective, the Hekhalot are a revolutionary manifesto, desiring social innovation and the overthrow of the established order and of accepted authority.

This interpretation overlooks all the inherent characteristics of the Hekhalot Literature and the abiding spirit reflected in its pages. Methodologically, the enigmatic nature of the Hekhalot's chronology, its still obscure historical background, and the anonymous character of its authorship, all rule out its use as a historiographic record or as a testimony of social conflict. Halperin's socio-historic reconstruction may be challenged from many points.

The Hekhalot Literature singularly lacks any allusion to mundane reality. In general, it does not offer genuine or reliable historical data, biographic information, or social facts. The few paragraphs that do allude to earthly concerns or historical reality may well be of an imaginary nature, reflecting a-historical or supra-historical reality. The scenarios described appear to be a pseudo-epigraphic narration founded upon metahistoric perception.²⁷ The anachronistic nature of the texts is best expressed by the coupling of R. Akiva and R. Ishmael with events occurring around and in connection with the Temple. These talmudic figures lived and died in the second century A.D., 50-100 years after the date of the destruction of the Second Temple. They could not possibly have related events occurring on the Temple Mount and or retain memories of the actions of the High Priest as told in the Hekhalot. The a-historic nature of these texts casts severe doubt on alleged historical deductions and on the extrapolation of reliable social data. The author wishes to extract socio-historical realities from a collection of texts which include mythical accounts of the heavenly realm, mystical narrations of the celestial throne and the angelic retinue, as well as magic incantations and detailed adjurations. This literature is concerned with the spiritual realities of the heavenly realm and with the mystical and magical ways to approach it. The alleged historical information and social realities thus "deduced" are at best questionable; in fact, they are highly improbable.

Also the underlying claim for the existence of a power struggle and of social conflict in the substratum of the Hekhalot Literature must be challenged. For contrary to Halperin's claims, the Hekhalot Literature in fact affirms the rabbinic ethos and strictly

adheres to the Halakha.²⁸ There is no explicit criticism of the rabbinic world or of its law. On the contrary, all the chief protagonists come from the rabbinic milieu. The Hekhalot texts express no opposition whatever to this world; to find “implicit” allusions to earthly social conflict requires feats of imagination beyond the power of most readers of these texts.

No doubt parallel sources such as the Qumran scrolls, Early Christian Literature, and the Gnostic corpus do exhibit straightforward and undeniable expressions of social criticism and undisguised struggles for social power alongside the explicit desire for spiritual innovation and religious change. These subjects, then, were not out of bounds and there was no conceivable need to disguise revolutionary views behind a mystical mask of heavenly ascensions or in terms of angelic rivalry. There is not one specific passage clearly linking the social conflict which Halperin perceives with the mythological world inhabited by the celestial retinue and those ecstatic mystics who braved the dangers of the ascent to the Chariot. The suggestion that the social stratum from which this manifesto emerged was the *Am Ha-Aretz* stratum cannot be seriously entertained since it is highly unlikely that the unlettered masses would compose exalted poetry and inspiring mystical accounts, though it must be admitted that the historical and cultural circumstances of these people has so far not been sufficiently studied.

Halperin founds his social introspection upon the text known as *Sar Torah* (“Prince of the Torah”) (Halperin pp. 376-383, Schäfer nos. 297-306). He rejects accepted opinion which considers this text to be a sub-genre of the Hekhalot or indeed to be a later addition.²⁹ This section is considerably different in style and in structure, in theme and in protagonists, from all other Hekhalot texts. These are factors which Halperin has not taken sufficiently into account; according to him, “the motivation and concerns of writers and readers, usually so inscrutable in the Hekhalot Literature are here (i.e. in *Sar Torah*) transparent” (p. 376) This is to assume an unsubstantiated homogeneous picture of the Hekhalot Literature and to ascribe a nonexistent uniformity to these heterogeneous sources by simply viewing the entire corpus in the perspective of *Sar Torah*. The use of this singularly dubious text as the key for the

interpretation of the manifold traditions incorporated in the Hekhalot is questionable, to say the least.

In fact the validity of this kind of socio-psychological approach should be questioned as well. An analysis of an entire society is attempted on the basis of a text which furnishes no chronological or historical clues. Far-reaching conclusions are presented while in fact we know nothing about the individuals involved and very little about the cultural background. An analysis attempted from a distance of at least one and a half millenia and having nothing to go on but fragmentary anonymous mystic accounts and obscure religious testimonies does not inspire much confidence.

In conclusion, Halperin's study no doubt offers new vistas for discussing certain dimensions of the Ezekiel exegesis and sheds light on divergent courses of homiletic and interpretive developments in the Merkabah tradition. However, its reductionist attitude to the Hekhalot ('a social manifesto') which postulates that the enthusiastic religious expression and the exalted spirit, so characteristic of this literature, are but a disguise for class conflict seems unacceptable. The attempted reconstruction of a socio-historic framework, drawn from a corpus noted for its a-historic or metahistoric character, needs better methodological justification than the one adduced. The use of psychological insight for deciphering the hidden face of a text and for elucidating angelic figures as human projection may be a worthy undertaking, but it requires more convincing proof.

The intriguing questions relating to the both socio-historical and spiritual sources which generated the Hekhalot and Merkabah Literature remain unsolved also after Halperin's massive study.

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* See n. 2.

¹ "Ezekiel saw a vision and told about varieties of a chariot" (zene merkabah). Ben Sira 49:6-10, (M.H. Segal, *Sefer Ben Sira Ha Shalem*, Jerusalem 1958, pp. 336-9.) compare the Septuagint to Ezekiel 43:3.

² D.J. Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot, Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel's Vision*, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) Tübingen 1988, *Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum* 16, 610 pp.

³ Mishna Hagigah 2:1; Megillah 4:10; see Halperin, *ibid*, pp. 11-31.

⁴ G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, New York, 1954³ chap. 2; *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition*, New York, 1960.

⁵ See Halperin, *ibid*, reference list, Section 10, pp. 569-73; E.E. Urbach, "The Traditions about Merkabah Mysticism in the Tannaitic Period" in *Studies in Mysticism and Religion Presented to G. Scholem*, Jerusalem 1967, in Hebrew; M. Smith, "Observations on Hekhalot Rabbati", In *Biblical and Other Studies*, ed. A. Altmann, pp. 142-160, Harvard 1963; I. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkabah Mysticism*, Leiden 1980; I. Chernus, *Mysticism in Rabbinic Judaism*, Berlin and New York, 1982; J. Dan, *Three Types of Ancient Jewish Mysticism*-7th Annual Feinberg memorial Lecture in Judaic Studies, University of Cincinnati 1984: *idem*, "The Chambers of the Chariot", *Tarbiz* XLVII (1977), pp. 49-55.

⁶ See Note 4 above.

⁷ Major portions of the Hekhalot corpus may be found in P. Schäfer, (ed), *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, Tübingen 1981; *idem* (ed.) *Geniza-Fragmente zur Hekhalot-Literatur*, Tübingen 1984. See, R. Elijor, *Hekhalot Zutarti-Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought*, Supplement I, Jerusalem, 1982; *idem*, "Schäfer's Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur", in, *Jewish Quarterly Review* LXXVII, no's. 2-3 (Oct. 1986-Jan 1987) pp. 213-217; *idem*, "Schäfer's Geniza-Fragmente zur Hekhalot-Literatur", in *Jewish Quarterly Review* (forthcoming).

⁸ See B. Levin, *Otzar Ha-Geonim*: Thesaurus of the Gaonic Responsa. vol. IV Hagigah, Jerusalem 1931, pp. 13-15.

⁹ See H. Grätz, "Die Mystische Literatur in der gaonischen Epoche" in *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums*, 1859. G. Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism...* (note 4 above) pp. 1-30; *idem*, *Major Trends...* (note 4 above) p. 43f. *idem*, *Ursprung und Anfänge der Kabbale*, Berlin 1962, *Studia Judaica*: Forschungen zur Wissenschaft des Judentums, vol. 3.

¹⁰ See Halperin, pp. 5-7; compare J. Dan, "Ma'aseh Merkabah Be Sifrut Hazal-on D. Halperin, the Merkabah in Rabbinic Literature", *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought*, 2, 2 (1983), PP. 307-16.

¹¹ For differing opinions on this subject see: I. Chernus, "Visions of God in Merkabah Mysticism," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* XIII (1-2) pp. 123-146, 1982. R. Elijor, "The Concept of God in Hekhalot Mysticism", in, J. Dan, (ed.), *The Proceedings of the First International Conference on the History of Jewish Mysticism*, Jerusalem 1987 pp. 13-64.

¹² H.E. Gaylord, "Speculations, Visions, or Sermons," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 13, 1/2(82) pp. 187-194. J. Dan (note 10 above). P. Schäfer, "Merkabah Mysticism and Rabbinic Judaism," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 104, 3(1984). Y. Liebes, *The Sin of Elisha, The Four who Entered Paradise*, Jerusalem 1986, p. 12-13.

¹³ BT Shabbat 88a-89b; see Halperin, chapters 2, 3, 4 & 8.

¹⁴ See Halperin pp. 7-9, 15, 30, 34.

¹⁵ See notes 4, 7 and 11 above.

¹⁶ See Halperin, chapter 5, 6 and 7.

¹⁷ *Tanhuma* Emor 16, *Tanhuma Buber* Emor 23, *Leviticus Rabbah* 27:3, *Mekhilta* to Exodus 14:29, *Beshallah* Chapter 7, *Exodus Rabbah* 42:5.

¹⁸ See Halperin pp. 157-168, and 185-190.

¹⁹ See Halperin p. 55.

²⁰ *Ibid* pp. 185-190.

²¹ *Ibid*, Chapter 6.

²² M. Smith, *Observations on...* (See note 5 above); H. Odeberg (ed.) *3 Enoch, The Hebrew Book of Enoch*, with a Prolegomenon by J.C. Greenfield, New York

1973: P.S. Alexander, "The Historical Setting of the Hebrew Book of Enoch", *Journal of Jewish Studies* 28 (1977) pp. 156-180; I. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and...* (see note 5 above) 1980; J. Halperin, *The Merkabah in Rabbinic Literature*, New Haven 1980; J. Dan, Review of I. Gruenwald's *Apocalyptic and Merkabah Mysticism*, *Tarbiz* 51(1982) pp. 685-691; idem, "Mysticism in Jewish History, Religion and Literature", in J. Dan and F. Talmage, (eds), *Studies in Jewish Mysticism*, Cambridge, 1982; G. Stroumsa, "Form(s) of God: Some Notes on Metatron and Christ," *Harvard Theological Review*, 76(3) 1983, pp. 269-288; P.S. Alexander, "Comparing Merkabah Mysticism and Gnosticism, an essay in Method," *Journal of Jewish Studies* XXXX (1984); P. Schäfer, "New Testament and Hekhalot Literature," *Journal of Jewish Studies*, vol. XXXX (1984); pp. 19-35; R. Elior, "The Concept of God in Hekhalot Mysticism", in J. Dan (ed.) *The Proceedings of the First International Conference on Early Jewish Mysticism*, Jerusalem 1987, pp. 13-64; I. Gruenwald, "The Impact of the Priestly Tradition on the Creation of Merkabah Mysticism," *ibid*, pp. 64-120; P. Schäfer, "The Problem of the Redactionist Identity of Hekhalot Rabbati," *ibid*, pp. 1-12; L. Schiffman, "Hekhalot Mysticism and the Qumran Literature", *ibid*, pp. 121-138.

²³ See Notes 4, 5, 7 and 11 above.

²⁴ See Schäfer, *Synopse* (note 7 above) nos. 18-186, 204-5. 240, 253, 309-10, 420, 565-6, 557, 560, 623-628, 634, 680; A. Altmann, "Qedusha Hymns in the Early Hekhalot Literature" (Hebrew) *Melilah* 2(1946) also in 'Panim šel Yahadut,' Jerusalem 1983, pp. 44-67; J. Strugnell, "The Angelic Liturgy at Qumran," *Vetus Testamentum*, Supps. VII (1960), pp. 318-345; I. Gruenwald, "The Angelic Liturgy, The Qedushah, and The Problem of the Writing of the Hekhalot Literature", in *Praqim BeToldot Yerushalayim BeYamei Bayit Sheni*, Jerusalem 1981, pp. 459-481; K.E. Grözinger, "The Names of God and the Celestial Powers, Their Function and Meaning in the Hekhalot Literature," in J. Dan (ed) *Proceedings of the First International Conference on Early Jewish Mysticism*, Jerusalem, 1987, pp. 53-71; G. Scholem, "Shiur Qomah", in *Pirquei Yesod BeHavanat HaKabbalah*, Jerusalem, 1976, pp. 153-186.

²⁵ See R. Elior, "The Concept of God," (note 11 above) [in English translation], in, J. Dan (ed.) *Binah*, Studies in Jewish Thought-Vol. II, New York 1989; for the broader cultural context of these phenomena cf. C.R. Phillips, *The Sociology of Religious Knowledge in the Roman Empire to A.D. 284*, Berlin 1986.

²⁶ Halperin, chap. 9.

²⁷ See J. Dan, "The Concept of History in Hekhalot and Merkabah Literature" in *Binah*, vol. I (note 25 above).

²⁸ S. Lieberman, "The Knowledge of the Halakha by the Author(s) of the Hekhalot", app. 2 to I. Gruenwald, (note 5 above); G. Scholem, *J.G.M.M.* cha. II.

²⁹ I. Gruenwald, note 5 above; pp. 143, 169-173; G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, (note 4 above), pp. 77f. Idem, *J.G.M.M.*, p.12.

BOOK REVIEWS

BOOK SURVEY

Histories of Religions

Several series and books were reviewed under this title in NUMEN xxvi (1979): 250ff. The existence of ever so many textbooks for undergraduates and "interested readers" (fortunately) does not seem to deter publishers, editors, and authors. John A. Hutchinson's *Paths of Faith* (1969) has seen a third, revised and enlarged edition.¹ It is an extremely well-written and stimulating text for undergraduates, especially as every chapter has a section "Questions and Issues" to stimulate reflection, as well as suggestions for further study. Ch.2 has added sections on African Traditional and American Indian religions. The 14 chapters dealing with the various religious traditions are preceded by a thoughtful chapter "On Being Students of Religion" and followed by "Modern Criticisms of Religion" and "Traditional Faiths and the Future". Teachers and students will find this volume a useful asset.

Routledge are publishing a paperback series entitled *Library of Religious Beliefs and Practices*. The names of the authors as well as of the two General Editors (John Hinnells and Ninian Smart) are sufficient guarantee of its quality. Can anyone ask for more than a textbook on Zoroastrianism by Mary Boyce² or on Theravada by Richard Gombrich?³ The latter gives his readers not merely an authoritative account of early Buddhism, its relation to pre-Buddhist Indian religion, the sangha, and the spread of the teaching to South-East Asia in particular. These can also be found elsewhere. The characteristic Gombrich style gives us more: the history of the transformation of an originally urban (India) religion to that of an agricultural society (Sri Lanka), the influence of Christian (colonial as well as missionary) contacts, and the new developments (urbanisation, population explosion) that may change the face of Buddhism beyond recognition.

Paul Williams' volume on Mahayana⁴ delivers more than its subtitle promises, because in addition to the chapters on doctrine,

Madhyamika, Yogacara, the Mahayana sutras etc., there is also a good chapter on Faith and Devotion. Non-scholastic students of Buddhism are eagerly looking forward to a volume dealing mainly with the latter subject, in fact with folk-Buddhism in general.

Once upon a time it was possible to treat Sikhism as a regional Punjabi phenomenon. This approach is undoubtedly still valid for the early history of the Sikhs. With increasing migrations and mobility, new religious "diasporas" are multiplying (a phenomenon to which Ninian Smart has drawn attention), the Sikh diaspora being one of the more prominent. The writer of these lines unashamedly admits finding the reading of the British journal *THE SIKH COURIER* (since 1960) of greater interest than the *Adi Granth*. No one can complain of dearth of books on Sikhism (e.g., Cole & Sambhi, 1978, or McLeod, 1976), but also serious research is in evidence. The papers read at the Berkeley Conference on Sikh Studies⁵ are a case in point. The volume deals on a highly expert level with all the main problems: the original context and history, the Sant and Vaishnava background, the scriptures and their problems, the Sikh diaspora and Sikh nationalism. It is exactly the kind of book we have been waiting for after graduating from the introductory textbooks.

One of the series mentioned in *NUMEN* xxvii (1979) was praised for being a double series: histories viz. surveys of the various religious traditions, and accompanying volumes of selected readings. Prof. John Hinnells has undertaken to edit a similar series of "Textual Sources for the Study of Religion" for Manchester University Press. The Sikh anthology has been ably edited and translated by McLeod,⁶ known to us from his studies of Guru Nanak and of the *Granth*. The Zoroastrian volume has been edited and translated by Mary Boyce,⁷ and to praise it would be an impertinence. Hinduism was taken care of by W. Doniger O'Flaherty,⁸ and this reviewer's opinion of her work need not be repeated for the umpteenth time. The extremely tricky volume on Judaism, ably done by Philip S. Alexander, has already been reviewed in *NUMEN* xxxv, 1988: 145.⁹ The whole series can be unhesitatingly recommended to students and teachers alike.

Prof. Hultkrantz is not only one of the leading authorities on North American Indian religions, he is also one of the scholars most

deeply concerned with the relationship between history of religions and anthropology. Perhaps the publishers felt that Hultkrantz and his work (although much, if not most, of it was published in English) were not sufficiently known in America, and hence a collection of his papers¹⁰ is prefaced by a long introduction (almost 30 pp.) from the pen of the editor. The chapters are organised in four sections: Belief and Myth, Worship and Ritual, Ecology and Religion, Persistence and Change. They are insightful studies which also give the reader a good overview of the range, style and quality of Hultkrantz's researches. The same editor is also responsible for another extremely helpful Hultkrantz volume¹¹ which gives us a history of the study of North American Indian Religion from the first beginnings to Boas and his school (and their aftermath), research approaches since 1925, the influence of these studies on the General History of Religions (not merely a matter of visions, guardian-spirits or totemism), and the state of the art today. It is the kind of book about which, once it has been written, one wonders why it had not been written long before.

Having mentioned so many recent authors, we are in private duty bound to devote at least one short paragraph to the founding fathers of our discipline which were the great Arab travellers and Muslim heresiographers. Outstanding among the latter (he could draw on the works of eminent predecessors!) was no doubt al-Shahrastani. His *Kitab al-Milal wa-al-nihal* was hitherto available to non-Arabists in a rather stiff German translation (1850-1) only, and in partial English and French translations. UNESCO has well deserved of our guild by including in its series of "Representative Works" a new French version of this classic, changing the translation of the title from the usual "Book of Sects and Creeds" to "Book of Religions and Sects".¹² The fine introduction by G. Monnot pp. 3-84 is followed by the translation, indices, bibliography and chronological tables.

Death, Dying and Re-dying

Among the many definitions (or at least descriptions) of man is "the eternal protestant against death". The present writer, though refusing to define religion, has described its beginning as "the moment when men began to do more with a corpse than was strictly

necessary for its disposal''. As regards early man, we know more about his funerary arrangements than about his way of life. Tombs, not houses, were built with a view to permanence. (See also the remarks in NUMEN xxiv, 1987:277). The fact that our awareness of death not only colours but actually determines our *condition humaine* is a commonplace, even without existentialist 'being-unto-death' or E. Becker's influential *The Denial of Death* (1975; see also below on F. Sontag's study of Becker). Becker derives also our concept of 'evil' from our desperate attempts to tackle this threat, much as Lorenz derives the 'so-called' (*sic*) evil from our biological heritage. Of course the really interesting thing is not the denial, but the culturally standardised 'denial of the denial' of death: meditation-practices connected with graveyards (viz. 'churchyards—what a fascinating sociolinguistic phenomenon!) or cremation-grounds, *memento mori*, the obligatory skull on the table at certain periods in European painting etc. At any rate the spate of books on the subject, either philosophical or surveying the beliefs to be found in the various cultures, is still snowballing. In 1977 a highly interesting book was published in Germany with the significant title *Der Mensch und sein Tod*. Please note: not man and death, but man and *his* death. The German member-group of the IAHR published in 1980 a symposium on 'Life and Death in the Religions of the World', and the Catholic publishing-house Herder brought out a very thought-provoking anthology *Angesichts des Todes leben* (1983). Prof Klimkeit has edited a popular but well-written survey of beliefs on the subject in ten different religious cultures.¹³ The same intention, but far more ambitiously conceived and much less successfully executed, underlies *Encounters with Death*.¹⁴ Most of the chapters are written by 'insiders' viz. representative spokesmen, with the odd exception of Islam written by a Christian. Even more odd is the picture of religions the unwary reader is likely to obtain: Bahai, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism (together 5 chapters), and Assemblies of God, Baptists, Churches of Christ, Mormons, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Seventh Day Adventists, Unitarians, Methodists (together 10 chapters). The excuse for this odd assortment is that in spite of its very general title the book does not intend to describe the world but exclusively the U.S. scene.

Since Jacques LeGoffe's masterly study of the development of the notion of purgatory (as distinct from hell) in the West, the discussion has gathered momentum. LeGoffe was probably wrong in asserting that re-incarnation viz. rebirth religions like Buddhism knew no purgatories but only hells. The opposite seems nearer the truth: there are no hells but only purgatories where you undergo unspeakable tortures pending your next rebirth. A very readable little book is "Uncertain Hereafter"¹⁵ published by the Catholic Academy in Munich. In the nature of things the book is (Christian) theology-centered, from the Bible, via the church-fathers and the reformation, to modern attempts to grapple with this ultimate human mystery.

Needless to say that the problem of re-incarnation is ultimately rooted (at least for those with a Hindu or Buddhist background) not in the cycle of rebirths but rather in the unending cycle of "re-dying". A Catholic theologian who is also an historian of religion with an ecumenical mind can surely be expected to produce an interesting (Christian) study of these beliefs, especially as the subject has never ceased to fascinate also the West—from the ancient gnostics to the modern anthroposophists; cf. also Martin Willson, *Rebirth and the Western Buddhist* and the remarks in NUMEN xxxvi, 1989:270-1. Prof. Friedli's¹⁶ account is original in its conception. For what he gives us is not simply a description of this belief in the various traditions, but a typology and phenomenology which places it in the respective spiritual contexts. The survey is preceded by an account of the problem which this belief poses in the context of contemporary occidental experience, and concludes with a thoughtful epilogue.

Most of the early research on afterlife (before the anthropological invasion) was conducted by classical (e.g., W.F. Otto, Rohde 1898), biblical (e.g. Schwally 1892) and orientalist (Egypt and Mesopotamia) scholars. The recent Tübingen dissertation by Tsukimoto,¹⁷ is as pedestrian as it is erudite and useful for Assyriologists because of the collection of relevant texts, from Old Babylonia to Mari to Nuzi to Assyria. The author is well aware of the social functions of the cult of the dead, especially ancestors and more especially royal ancestors, but admits that the texts "do not permit precise assertions". Yet looking after the dead and caring

for them (*kispum* is a central concept, as the texts, tables and careful discussion by the author amply demonstrate) clearly was a major concern also in Mesopotamian culture.

K. Spronk's study on the "beatific afterlife" in ancient Israel and the Near-East¹⁸ casts its net wider and re-opens many an old discussion. After a brief survey of the O.T. and N.T., the O.T. versions, and the history of modern research (with its partial dependence on antiquated 19th cent. theories), the author turns to the N-E context (and influences?): Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, Canaan, Ugarit, Persia etc. He finds evidence of early beliefs in some kind of hopeful "beyond death", and hence also continuities which make certain later developments less innovative than normally assumed. We have become used to attempts to derive e.g., belief in resurrection in partly Israelite and not exclusively Iranian terms, and apparently some people seem convinced. The author, as an Old Testament scholar rather than historian of religion, makes a special point of the (commonplace) distinction between "immortality" (which can mean ever so many different things to different people) and the "beatific afterlife" (which, of course does not mean the Pure Land but "eternally being with God"). But these truisms do not detract from the value of a solid and careful study, even if many readers will find lots to disagree with.

The provocatively paradoxical title *Ritual Poetry and the Politics of Death*¹⁹ will make many a reader sit up straight. Dealing with the "politics" i.e., competition, intrigues and hidden power-struggles relating to imperial succession in the Taika period also means dealing with belated and temporary burials viz. "enshrinements" (*mogari*). The author speaks of "double burial" when referring to what in our standard language is called "secondary burial". His analysis exhibits much original insight, theoretical sophistication, and occasionally irritating overestimation of his innovative originality in addition to an often repetitive style. But all this does not detract from a brilliant achievement, especially his ingenious use of the three best-known ancient texts (anthologies of ancient poetry, or texts containing ancient poetry: the *Kojiki*, and *Manyōshū*) in support of his thesis that this burial custom was part of the machinery of manipulating myth and ritual for factional (and possibly ideological) purposes. The author thus presents not simply

a study of imperial burial customs but also of the “inner workings” of what is known as the “Taika Reform”.

From 7th cent. Japan to late imperial (1500-1911) and modern China. The 1985 conference on Chinese death rituals has produced an impressive and fascinating volume,²⁰ the twelve rich chapters of which are impossible to summarise and which take us, chronologically, to Mao and the People’s Republic. The substantive richness (in terms of periods, specific subject-matter, geographic focus) is matched by the methodological richness that sometimes results from a successful conference-marriage of historians and anthropologists. The importance of death rituals has never been in doubt. After all, our old standard classic, de Groot’s *Religious System* is in fact a giant torso dealing not with Chinese religion but with mortuary ritual. What enabled the central imperial government and its bureaucracy to hold this vast diversity of populations, dialects, ecological backgrounds etc. together? SUN Yat-sen once complained that the Chinese were not a solid population-body but a “mass of shifting sands”. The book under review adds a new perspective to the many partial answers by arguing that death-rituals (both the practices and the concomitant beliefs) provided a unifying factor because they were not simply an anonymous cultural heritage. In fact, the state played a leading part in the standardisation of the rites, not least by means of the written viz. printed word. Let no one complain that there is too much literature on the subject. The Watson-Rawski volume shows how much innovative work is still possible.

Prof Flew’s *Logic of Mortality* is a strictly philosophical work.²¹ The author’s typology distinguishes between the Way of the Astral Body, the Platonic-Cartesian Way, and the Reconstructionist Way. Flew’s style here, as always, is both amusing and hard-hitting. Plato, Aristotle and Aquinas, the Cartesian turn, the problem of “personal identity”, the “mind-body” problem and the new parapsychology (with its hidden Platonic-Cartesian assumptions) make fascinating reading. Disembodied spiritual existence and psi-factors don’t fare too well in Flew’s hands, the burden of whose argument is given in the book’s motto, a quotation from a Chinese poem as translated by Arthor Waley: nature presents a picture of constant decay and renewal, “but he whom we carry to the grave will never more return”.

“Logic of Mortality” is also the title of Flew’s chapter in another volume on death and immortality in the religions of the world.²² The volume is a mixed bag: the chapters on the various religions are partly historical accounts, partly (apologetic?) attempts to dress up traditional teachings in a manner acceptable to contemporary sensibilities. There are accounts of the “naturalistic case for extinction” as well as of the *prima facie* evidence for survival (presented as a “critical outline”). The final chapter suggests that certain recent developments such as research into states of consciousness during NDE and into mystical experiences, as well as the development of electronic equipment (!) may render communication with disincarnate entities “more coherent and convincing”. Here we have the ultimate modern triumph of materialism. Old-fashioned materialism denied spiritual entities (perhaps because they still had an inkling of what spirituality was), but it is outdone by contemporary materialism which proves spiritual existence by means of electronic devices. Let it be said in praise of this volume that it makes no mention of ectoplasm, the “Super ESP hypothesis” being more plausible!

Mutual contacts, perceptions and misperceptions

Culture contacts are not an innovation of our jet-age. They are as old as human history. During all the decennia that the writer of this line has taught, he began every course on the spread of religions by demanding that his students take an introductory course in economic geography. How on earth can you talk about the spread of Islam to S-E Asia (as distinct from the conquests *ferro ignique* during its first century) without a knowledge of monsoon and trade-winds, not to speak of ship-building techniques? And after economic geography and political history comes socio-psychology: who created which stereotypes? Who invented the slogan of Eastern “spirituality” versus Western “materialism”, and, once invented, why did certain circles (not only in India but also in Europe) swallow it with such gusto? And why did the students at Peking University practically riot when Rabindranath Tagore visited China and talked about Asian spirituality: “Talk about modernisation and not about your bl... spirituality which keeps us enslaved to the colonial powers”. J.M. Steadman’s *The*

Myth of Asia (1969) is still one of the most eminently readable books on the subject.

Contacts and influences across continents are, of course, the daily bread of Silk Road students and not only of the Thor Heyerdahls of this world. But the Silk Road is not merely a west-east route, as important for the history of trade as it is for the history of religions (Manichees, Nestorians). The route from India is at least as important. A mere glance at a geographical map shows that (unless you take the maritime route from China, as did I-Tsung, 7th cent.) the eastern route is barred by marshes, jungles and hostile tribes. Northern crossings were barred by the Himalayas. The only possible route from e.g. Mathura or the Indus Valley would be via Taxila, Peshawar, Bactrian Balkh or, in other words, Gandhara, the Kushan kingdom (Kanishka!) and the area that is nowadays called Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bokhara etc., and then linking up with the "Silk Road". Gandhara Buddhist art did not stop in Dun-Huang or Chang-an but continued to Japan. All this suffices to explain our feelings of frustration at the lack of an up-to-date and authoritative work on India-China relations, especially during the centuries of Buddhist penetration to East Asia. Such a work would have to deal with the economic (trade) infrastructure that made the migration of Buddhism possible. Bagchi (1950) wrote from an exclusively Indian standpoint, and Hu Shih (1937) gave a somewhat negative evaluation of Indian influence. But it seems that sometimes it is worth waiting for the appearance of a study of rare quality, such as Xinri LIU's.²³ Readers will no doubt subscribe to Romila Thapar's words of praise in her Foreword. From a discussion of (shifting) trade-routes and of trade items, the author takes us to Buddhist ideology and commercial ethos (shades of Weber!) and from there to the real stuff: monasteries and laity in Kushan (first) and the northern Wei (last), with an account of the establishment of Buddhist institutions on the way. It would be ungracious to poke fun at a first-rate scholar dedicated to her country because that country has a totalitarian regime. We shall, therefore, ignore her legitimate criticism of the notions of "oriental despotism" and the "Asiatic mode of production" attributed to Wittfogel who, indeed, made considerable use of them. But some of us remember having heard vague rumours, during our

childhood days, to the effect that a certain Karl Marx talked about an oriental mode of production. However, for a scholar working in a communist country it is evidently easier to have a go at Wittfogel rather than at Marx. *Honni soit qui mal y pense.*

That “India and the West” pose problems of understanding (as well a history of misunderstanding to which both sides contributed equally) hardly makes headlines news. Prof. J.L. Mehta’s selected essays²⁴ should really have appeared in a series dealing with Comparative Philosophy rather than “World Religions”. As a philosophical work it definitely deserves careful reading. Non-philosophers may not be interested all that much in Sartre, and may even prefer a more sociological/anthropological approach to questions such as “Intercultural Understanding” or “The Concept of Progress”. The last chapter of the book deals with Vedanta and—how could it be otherwise—Heidegger. The latter presents an intriguing problem also to anti-Heideggerian students of religion. The interest of the Heidegger phenomenon resides in the influence his thought has had on modern interpreters (or perhaps we should use here the sacred mantram “hermeneutics”) of religions. Unthinkable without Heidegger are Hans Jonas’ understanding of Gnosticism, Bultmann on the N.T., or the so-called Kyoto School’s profundities about Zen-cum-Christianity. We have long missed Heidegger-and-Vedanta. Well, now we have it.

An “Essay in Understanding” of much heftier calibre and great interest to the historian of religions is (in spite of its heavyweight philosophical orientation) W. Halbfass’ *India and Europe*,²⁵ now available also to non-German readers in an enlarged and revised translation. (The original ed. appeared in 1981). The author acknowledges his indeptedness to the partnership in philosophical dialogue with J.L. Mehta, but here we have no collection of essays but a well-structured book, treating of the role played by India in European self-understanding (antiquity, Islam, missionaries, romanticism, Hegel, Schopenhauer and—inevitably—the contemporary “hermeneutic situation”) as well as of the Indian tradition, in the widest sense, as affected by the presence of Europe. (The occasional references to Zen, with or without Hegel, Heidegger *et al.*, are, as in most western philosophical writing, to Kyoto-school Zen, which is a constant source of puzzlement to those whose

background is monastic Zen). Four thought-provoking appendices conclude the book. Not everything is new, and what we are told about Indian concepts of experience, tolerance, and especially Indian “inclusiveness” is ancient and traditional academic wisdom. But there is more than enough to make this an important book, despite its deliberate onesidedness. One sentence may serve as alpha and omega: “Modern Indian thought finds itself in a historical context created by Europe, and it has difficulties speaking for itself..... [But] the power of the Indian tradition has not exhausted itself..... The dialogue situation is still open”.

Geographia sacra

“Geography of Religions” has established itself as a recognised branch of study, although its specific contribution is not always very clear. After all, we are dealing, by definition, with the religions of human groups living on this earth and not floating in empyrean heights. But sometimes the relation between the *where* and the *what* of religious developments requires special attention. A sample of geography of religion at its best has been presented by A. Strobel in his Montanist study.²⁶ A connection between the Montanist revival (*sive* heresy) and the traditions of Phrygian enthusiastic religion, religiosity and deities (Kybele, Sabazios/Dionysos and others) has been argued more than once. But Strobel left his desk and scoured the landscape for geographical evidence i.e., archaeological and inscriptional remains as well as human impressions (which does not mean that he looked for “Latter-Day Montanists” but rather for the “feel” of traditional cultural realities). It is a definitive contribution to Montanist studies and a *religionsgeographische* gem.

There can, of course, be no geography more sacred, at least to certain religions, than that of the Holy City of Jerusalem. A slim volume, in inverse ratio to its weighty scholarship, has been published in the series *Abhandlungen d. deutschen Palestinavereins*. What makes this slim volume²⁷ so extraordinary is that it contains two complementary monographs. H. Busse deals, in 27 pp., with a triangle: three sanctuaries (Temple, Holy Sepulchre, Haram) and their mutual relationship both in legend and in reality. The

author's convincing conclusion assumes two cycles of Christian legends (the discovery of the tomb as told by Eusebius, and the invention of the Cross as told in other sources) which, in their turn, influenced Muslim notions regarding the identification of the Rock. (Thus already Donner in 1977). The Church of the Sepulchre and the Haram mosques, different as they are, were nevertheless sufficiently related to render mutual exchange of legendary traditions possible; both are, in a way, "successors" to the ancient Temple. G. Kretschmar (pp. 29-111) discusses the memorial sites of the Crucifixion and Resurrection, the problem of two basilicas and of one basilica serving a double commemoration, as well as the underlying traditions (especially as regards the role of "memorial sites" in the specific Jerusalem theology). Much light was to be gained from excavations, but the difficulties of archeological research (fortunately overcome at long last, at least to some extent) are as well-known as they are unedifying. The real problem is how to penetrate, with the combined tools of archeological and historical-textual evidence, behind (or underneath) the essentially Crusader church of today to the Constantinian and pre-Constantinian structures. Kretschmar's essay is a monument of solid erudition. The appendix on "Temple and Gologotha" confirms Busse's suggestions concerning continuities which exhibit considerable duration. As late as the Crusader period we witness an outburst of local legend, the Jewish ancestry of which seems more than probable. Here is a subject that requires another monograph. The author's argument—and this is of special value—takes into account not only archeological and literary evidence, but also the liturgical calendars of the Jerusalem memorial sites. Scholarship at its best.

There are, of course, also other Holy (if not holier—but fortunately we are not required to work with a hierometer) Cities, foremost among them Banaras. Diana Eck²⁸ clearly intends with her subtitle "City of Light" not merely a characterisation but a literal translation of the city's other name: *Kashi*. The correctness of the former is borne out by the beautiful combination of erudition and empathy in Prof. Eck's study: the latter point may still be open to debate (cf. e.g., D.P. Dubey, "Varanasi: A Name-Study" in *India Cultures Quarterly* 40, 1985). Cities can be holy for ever so many

reasons: because holy events, or even divine theophanies, took place there; holy men lived there; they harbour sacred objects, or their groundplan and layout reflect cosmic-mythic realities. Banaras has all those, although the latter quality seems to be fundamental. Prof. Eck presents not only a masterful survey of the city's history, its role as the City of Shiva in particular, of the Ganges and the ghats, of the many deities besides Shiva connected with the city etc., but also of what matters most: its spiritual significance as the city of death and liberation to pilgrims and, in fact, to all Hindus, for the whole Hindu tradition comes alive in these sensitive pages. I know of no comparably detailed study of the geography (the "zones") of a sacred city. Prof. Eck has successfully shown that the decisive thing about the geography of religion is the religious rather than the geographical dimension. If criticise we must (and reviewers often feel frustrated if they don't criticise), it is about the tendency, particularly conspicuous among ecumenically-minded Christians, to prove to themselves and to others how unprejudiced and profoundly *verstehend* their empathy can be. Perhaps students of religion should have the guts to leave *Wertfreiheit* to Weberian sociologists and to be more uninhibitedly explicit about their personal values. One does not have to go back to the good old missionary models to be a little more frank about the less edifying and at times repellent and obscene aspects of a religious phenomenon. Perhaps in a second edition Prof. Eck will favour us with a detailed chapter (rather than a few chaste references) about the orgiastic ecstasies, usually verging on revolting vulgarity, during the Holi Festival (New Year, usually celebrated in March) and also explain why no woman would venture into the streets during Holi. Diana Eck's Banaras book is already a classic, and should not need to sweep anything under the carpet.

Asia: West to East

The Swedish bench of Bishops has every reason to be proud of the number of scholars (theologians as well as historians of religion) on it. Tor Andrae's name is known to every student of Islam (at least to the extent that he has been translated from Swedish). His

work on Sufism was less well known because untranslated. The fact that a book published in 1947 has appeared forty years later in English is proof of its interest and value, especially as there is no dearth of Sufi literature (translations of texts as well as studies) in that language. There are, of course, problems in regard to which scholarship will always remain helpless e.g., the habit of certain Islam-fans to quote Sufi sources whenever they talk about Islam. I have met few scholars who are aware of such simple facts as the protracted and solemn parliamentary (!) debate—not in Saudi Arabia but in what is alleged to be a liberal Muslim country—whether it was permitted to print and read *ibn al-Arabi*, that famous “Islamic” authority invoked all the time. Tor Andrae’s study is of value still today, not so much because of the attention paid to “Islam and Christianity” (old hat by now) but to the role of Christian influence on the development of *zuhd*—*tasawwuf*, and for his phenomenology of Sufism.²⁹

One of the standard works on the spread of, and conversion to, Islam is the volume edited by N. Levtzion which is not even mentioned in A.M. Mujahid’s study. The book³⁰ is of considerable interest, despite its mediocrity, because of its focus on India. The history of both the tensions (leading to bloodshed on an unprecedented scale) and of the syncretisms between Hinduism and Indian Islam is well known. The fact that *harijan*, doubting the success of the Mahatma’s teachings, turn to religions that have no caste system has been noted ever so often in connection with Buddhist “revivals”, especially those sponsored by Ambedkar. That Islam may serve as another alternative is less well known. The immediate background of the book—both historical account and Islamic apologetics—is the 1981 wave of conversions in Tamilnadu, preceded by anti-caste riots in Maharashtra and Gujarat. Readers will remember the Hindu riots in Maharashtra in response to the proposal that Marathwala University be renamed after Dr. Ambedkar! Buddhism, because so easily misrepresented as similar to European secularism, was such a favourite to secularists of the Nehru type. It is definitely helpful to have a good account of the alternative Muslim option.

NUMEN xxxvi (1989) pp. 264, 269, mentioned translations and studies of Hindu devotional poetry. The subject has been of con-

siderable interest and attraction for a long time (cf. Nicol Mac-Nicol, *Psalms of the Maratha Saints*, 1919) because of its beauty and religious intensity. The Tamili saints are now getting their due. Their hymns to Shiva³¹ have been beautifully rendered, introduced and commented by Prof. Indira Viswanathan Peterson. Both the contents and the production of the book conform to the standards that we have come to take for granted from Princeton University Press.

Not all expressions of Indian religiosity are suitable material for Sunday Schools or should stand on the same shelf as the Psalms of the Marathi and Tamili saints. Although adjectives such as immoral, criminal, demonic, “transgressive” etc. beg more questions than any historian/anthropologist would care to answer, we do more or less know what is meant, provided we have moved away from divine = holy = ethically good = merciful etc. equations. The Indian pantheon not only has its tricksters but also its murderous criminals. The volume edited by A. Hiltebeitel³² is a real god(s) sent, and each of the 15 chapters is a gem, giving us insights into a Hinduism that is somewhat different from that gained by reading Radhakrishnan or Aurobindo. Each chapter would deserves a special review paragraph: Madeleine Biardeau, David Shulman, Kattavaraya, Virabhadra, Bhairo, the Benares Bir Babas, the Dikshita and ever so many more. This is a book no student of Hinduism can afford to ignore.

One of the great “world religions”—perhaps the most widely spread and at the same time the most persecuted of all—was the “Religion of Light” (*ming chao*); see NUMEN xxxiii, 1986:246-7. From its birth place in Iran, Manichaeism spread westward (where it all but converted Augustine) and to the East (China), with Central Asia on the way—so much so that the Turkestan part of the Silk Road is central not only to the study of Buddhism (still flourishing) but also of Manichaeism (*passé défini*). The Manichaean texts found in Turfan alone are in ever so many languages and scripts. We now owe an additional debt to Prof. Klimkeit for having made accessible in German a selection of these texts, translated from middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, and Uighur (old Turkish). The book³³ is, however, more than an anthology in translation: the introduction (which also surveys the history of research and summarises Central

Asian Manichaeism), comments and notes make it a valuable tool to students of Manichaeism.

If the doctrine of *anatta* is one of the central insights of the Buddha, it surely should be a matter of major concern to everyone interested in the notions of person, ego, self, subjectivity, identity etc. (Cf. also Werblowsky, 'Intersubjectivity, Persons and Selves' in *Archivio de Filosofia*, vo. 54, 1986, pp. 587-91). Steven Collins' important *Selfless Persons* has been reviewed in NUMEN xxi, 1984:142-3, as also have been the publications of another Buddhistologist, M. Carrithers. It was, therefore, a happy idea that these two, in conjunction with Steven Lukes, should publish a volume on 'The Category of the Person',³⁴ dedicated to Marcel Mauss, the sociologist who first drew our attention to the social significance of the concept. The editors very deliberately did not produce a Buddhistological volume but a collection of 13 penetrating essays, illustrating the problem with material from China, modern Africa, Papua—New Guinea, Kashmir Brahmins, Greeks (Momigliano) and others, all under the gigantic shadow of Marcel Mauss (and behind him, the less explicit but even more gigantic shadow of the *anattavadi*). To anyone concerned with this most fundamental aspect of our existence, this book will make compelling reading.

The Vision of Buddhism is a fine book,³⁵ as good and as indifferent as any of the dozens of publications on Buddhism inundating the market, and it can be recommended to undergraduate students and 'interested laymen', provided they do not take too seriously the pretentious self-advertisement ('New currents in the academic study of religion reveal that rather than there being something irreducible called 'religion', there are, in fact, many religions and that the more they are studied the more each one manifest itself as equally profound and adequate unto itself'). The editors of the series (the author of the volume under review happens to be the Chief Editor) have apparently just discovered America. Congratulations!

Institutes for 'Comparative Research', especially in 'Human Culture', seem to be multiplying by cell-division or some mysterious DNA factor. This facetious remark is not meant to detract from the value of H. Havnevik's important study of Tibetan nuns.³⁶ Obviously the account of Tibetan nuns proper is

essentially historic, that of nuns in exile is based on field-work. The role which Buddhism (and the Buddha) assigned to nuns, and to women in general, has been discussed ever so often and no comments on the subject are necessary here (cf. NUMEN xxix, 1982:128-131). It is not surprising, therefore, that the first chapter deals with "Women in Buddhist literature". The rest is a first-rate piece of research, covering "cultural norms and social reality" as well as current changes. Perhaps the achievement of the authoress will stimulate her colleagues to produce more monographs of similar quality on nuns and nunneries in other Buddhist societies.

Prof. Snellgrove's successor at the SOAS has initiated a new series *Buddhica Britannica*, in the hope that it will become a *series continua*. No.1, *The Buddhist Heritage*³⁷ contains the papers, 14 in number, read at a 1985 symposium, and well illustrates the multifaceted variety of this heritage (should we stick to the singular?). Snellgrove, Bechert, Zurcher, Lewis Lancaster, Youngsook PAK, Hee-Sung KEEL and others deal with Pali Scriptures, Newar Buddhism, recent finds in China, syncretism, excavations at Korean temple-sites, rock-cut canons in China, and much more. May this excellent No. 1 argue well for the *series continua*!

The bibliographical volumes of ARSI (Asian Religious Studies Information) are by now sufficiently well known. Unfortunately the bibliographies cannot claim to be complete and hence their usefulness is limited. Nevertheless they are useful as they list items which otherwise might escape the user's attention. Whether all items are worth listing (e.g. Mr Steven Addiss has entries from no. 98 to 112 (!) is another question. The Name and Subject indices are particularly useful, although the latter poses a problem. What are the criteria for determining key words? There is an item on Buddhist cult of relics (especially the tooth!), particularly in China, but the subject cannot be traced through the index, whereas "India's Search for the Unknown Christ" (echoes of Panikkar) is indexed. Many of the items listed are accompanied by at least one valuable reference to a review. ARSI no. 4³⁸ appeared in 1988. The transfer of the Institute and its facilities (library, microfilms etc.) to another location will probably entail considerable delays in future numbers.

Another bibliography published by the Institute is J. Pas' on Taoism.³⁹ A "select bibliography" is by definition a problematic

affair, but instead of grumbling about what is missing we should be grateful for what we have.

A third publication of the Institute should not go unmentioned. The *Tao-tsang Chi-Yao* has been published in ever so many editions since its original compilation in 1796-1820. Later edd. added more titles. Dr. W.Y. Chen has rendered the community of *taoisants* a service by producing a guide to the TTCY:⁴⁰ series index, author index, title index and subject index, all based on the 309 titles in the 25 volumes of the Taipei 1971 edition.

According to certain theologies the chief attribute of god is unchangeability. Historians of religion, on the other hand, take it for granted that gods (i.e., human ideas about them) and even pantheons change all the time, also in so-called "great traditions". Is there a Hindu in an Indian village, or in the streets of Bombay or Benares, who still bothers about Rudra, Indra or Mithra? People change the gods whom they invoke for any number of reasons. Religious and social history usually overlap. Prof. Valerie Hansen's study of Changing Gods is a model of erudition, subtle insight, and a capacity to see religious phenomena in their social context: no reductionism here but a holistic approach. The secret of fine scholarship is often in severe self-limitation. Hansen restricts herself, knowing well what she was doing, to the period 1127-1276 (i.e., the agitated and turbulent Southern Sung before the Yuan and Ming "stabilisation") with its drastic economic and social changes. To this period she brings formidable scholarship and a rare gift for handling sources—from popular literature and legend to temple-inscriptions and official edicts (the former generally reflecting the latter). Profound social and economic transformations together with political turbulence and trouble can make all the difference to people's attitudes to the gods to whom they turn for help in their distress. What renders folk-religion in China doubly fascinating is the process of seeking and obtaining official recognition (in official lists, registers of sacrifices etc.) of newly emerging but evidently effective gods. Hansen⁴¹ raises the study of folk-religion to new levels both substantively and methodologically. Beyond its self-imposed chronological limitation, it can serve as a model how this kind of research should be conducted. As this is Dr. Hansen's first major publication one cannot very well say "Valerie

has done it again''. But every reader will lay down her study with a sense of assurance that "Valerie will do it again".

Literature on the Lotus Sutra, the sutra of half of East Asia as it has been called, its influence on religious practice, culture and art from Dun-Huang to China (cf. e.g. J. LeRoy Davidson, *The Lotus Sutra in Chinese Art*, 1954) to Japanese sutra-scrolls, is immense. Even the "brief" bibliography on the Hokke-kyo and Japan at the end of the Tanabe volume (pp. 225-9) is bewildering. Yet no comprehensive overview, as distinct from studies of doctrinal and other details, existed. The Lotus Sutra had no Suzuki. The Tanabes have filled this lacuna⁴² with the assistance of a fine team of collaborators: doctrinal and literary aspects, early Tendai, Heian politics, *hon-jaku* and its relation to historical consciousness, and much more. Considering the fact that practically all non-Shinto derived "new religions" are (with a few exceptions) not simply Buddhist but specifically Lotus committed, the two final chapters are as indispensable as they are well-conceived: George Tanabe on modern Lotus nationalism (TANAKA Chigaku), and Helen Hardacre on the Lotus in modern Japan. The volume, like most collective works of this kind, is the outcome of a conference. A better volume is conceivable, but for the time being it is the best we have.

Shinshu, from Shinran to Rennyo, made its appearance in NUMEN xxxiii, 1990 no. 1, reporting on a valuable study by a (comparative) outsider. *Young Man Shinran*⁴³ is by a (comparative)—the term has been chosen because few adjectives are as relative as "inside" and "outside"—insider and Amidist priest. The author seeks to go beyond what seem to him the limitations of "purely historical" and purely religious-philosophical" scholarship, and he does so with a measure of success, placing Shinran in the social context of his age and its sense of crisis (needless to say that the word *Angst* necessarily appears in any contemporary writing). The opposition "purely historical" (without religious added) *versus* "purely religio-philosophical" (why not simply "purely philosophical"?) already gives away part of the show i.e., the strange assumption that religion/philosophy go together, whilst history is a different matter altogether. Apparently History of Religions still has to fight a long uphill battle. The author is rather unhappy about the hagiological character of so many studies of

great religious figures, but he should derive some comfort from the fact that neither he nor Shinran are alone. Every student of Dogen has been through the same experience. The author's "Reappraisal of Shinran's Life" is not all that revolutionary, but it is a fine study that can be read profitably in conjunction with Dobbins' book.

The Reiyu-kai has been mentioned several times in these Book-Surveys, and many readers may have wondered about the absence of the Rissho-Kosei-Kai. Also Guthrie's study⁴⁴ does not claim to be the overdue monograph on the RKK. It would be more correct to say that the author happened to use the RKK because it was well-represented in a certain mountain hamlet and therefore served as a convenient peg on which to hang a fine piece of anthropological fieldwork and to illustrate (by using a "new religion") the rather functionalist thesis of the essential rationality also of village religion. In their own way these "hilly-billies" are as rational as we imagine ourselves to be, and their religious choices are based on a cost-benefit and trade-off calculation: what are your needs and expectations? what are the promised benefits? and above all, how do these promises stand the test?

NUMEN xxxiv, 1987:118 expressed the hope that we would see before long Prof. Earhart's monograph on the Gedatsu-kai (viz. Shugendo Gedatsu Kai, as it was originally called). Earhart's expertise in Shugendo studies make him the ideal author of a study of this "new religion", founded in 1928 by OKANO Eizo, and the book,⁴⁵ a welcome addition to the growing corpus of *shin shuykyo* monographs, follows the by now standard pattern. This does not detract from its excellence or make it any less instructive. Chs. 2-7 recount the life and spiritual career of the founder, the life-histories of individual members (in answer to the perpetual question addressed to all new cults: who joins why?), the grass-roots basis and social activities, the organisational structure, and the round of religious activities. The nation-wide survey places the sect on the map of Japanese *shin shukyo* by means of tables and statistics, whilst chs. 1 and 8 round off the picture by doing the same in a theoretical and analytical way: starting with "an inside approach to Japanese religion" in general, and concluding with reflections on the new religions in contemporary Japan. As usual, Prof. Earhart never disappoints his readers. The book is all we hoped for and more.

The poet Tennyson's theodicy justified change with the fear "lest one good custom should corrupt the world". One good custom that will definitely remain beneficial is the collection in one volume of the scattered essays, articles and *disjecta membra* of senior scholars whose life, teaching and research have left a permanent mark. (I hold somewhat different views about the collected essays of younger scholars whose justification is their urgent need to publish a "book"). Joseph M. Kitagawa is one of the grand old men of our discipline, and though his work has had more than one centre of gravity, the history of Japanese religion certainly was one of its most central centres. The general historian of religion is always peeping through the outer layer of Japanology. Prehistoric background, early religion, the study of sacred texts, monarchy and government, master and saviour—the comparative religionist will jump at these titles and discover that he is being initiated into wider problems by way of a careful study of the very specific forms which they assumed in Japanese history. Add to these the essays which explicitly announce their Japanese or buddhological subject-matter, whether strictly focussed (Shinto, Maitreya, transformations of Buddhism) or more comparative (e.g., "sangha and ecclesia"), plus the chapters on Japan in the modern age, and the reader has in a handy volume what hitherto he had as separate papers in his file of JMK reprints. The author's indebtedness to his teacher Joachim Wach is discretely implicit in the title *On Understanding....*,⁴⁶ for it was the *Verstehen* of religious phenomena which has always been Kitagawa's main concern and which, in the apostolic succeeding of the academic sangha, he received, enriched and passed on to a younger generation.

The same, but dialogical version

"Dialogues" have been surveyed in NUMEN on more than one occasion (cf. NUMEN xxxiii, 1986:262 f.). The subject, although essentially theological, is of major interest to historians of religion since it indicates shifts in religious sensibilities, self-perception, and other-perception. The fact that religions (or rather certain [self-appointed?] spokesmen of religious traditions) feel the urge, or need, or duty to "dialogue" with others is an important datum.

The justifications of this undertaking, its methods, and the actual performance are all of equal significance. No less fascinating is the question which traditions jump on the dialogical bandwagon and how their *Leitinteresse* influences their "history of religion" i.e., their theological perception of both their own tradition and the "other". The great sinophile (and Protestant) philosopher Leibniz followed his Jesuit informants in proclaiming Confucianism to be the only valid partner and could not suppress a nasty little aside about "the unfortunate Buddha-idol" brought from India to China. Once upon a time philosophy was an honourable *ancilla theologiae*. Today Comparative Religion is degraded to the role of an *ancilla theologiae dialogicae et ecumenicae*. Hinduism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto, are on the bottom half (if not quite at the bottom) of the list, as most Christian theologians are enamoured of Buddhism, and to some extent (especially in Japan) *vice versa*. A special role is played in this connection by the so-called Kyoto School Buddhism-cum-Heidegger Zen. Still, there are theologians who have to be taken seriously also as historians of religion, and who are well worth reading, especially as they are profoundly aware that the undertaking they are engaged in implies not only transformation but mutual transformation. Prof. Ingram is always worth reading, and the full title of his *Buddhist Christian Dialogue* spells out these implications.⁴⁷ At the risk of repeating myself: his analysis of the "encounter" (how do the partners view not only each other but also the "other" traditions? what are their respective experiences of faith and their ways of practice? what are their paradigms of "selfhood" and their conceptions of the Divine?) has an exemplary quality that goes beyond Christianity and Buddhism.

No less serious and readable a scholar is Prof. F. Streng. When the two join forces and together edit a volume on Buddhist-Christian dialogue,⁴⁸ the result should not be ignored. It is surely not accidental that the same key-terms occur in the subtitles of both books.

F.R. Thelle deals with Christianity and Buddhism in Japan. (Shinto is, apparently, not of sufficient interest). The main emphasis is on the period 1854-1899 (though the "Christian Century" beginning with Francis Xavier is not ignored) i.e., the opening of Japan, the missionary (this time mainly Protestant) invasion,

and the virulent anti-Christianity of Japanese Buddhism. After all, in a period of rampant Shinto-chauvinism the poor Buddhists had to prove that far from being the representatives of an alien un-nipponese intrusion, they were as fervently loyal and anti-foreign patriots as any kokka-Shinto ideologist. Fortunately things did not stop there, and with the help of Buddhist Bodhisattvas and the Christian God we have progressed “from conflict to dialogue”.⁴⁹ Perhaps we are, as the Bible says, all sons of one father, or perhaps fellow-seekers (and finders) of the same *tao*, or both. Let us render thanks to the theologians for it is they (among others) who are “making” the history of religions.

Varia

*The Return of the Gods*⁵⁰ is a well-written and thought-provoking, but essentially philosophico-theological reflection on the work of E. Becker (of *Denial of Death* fame). Becker is a kind of academic high-class gossamer, in some ways reminiscent of E. Fromm, that Billy Graham for psychology-oriented intellectuals. Becker’s ideas and criticisms may have been stimulating and helpful, but only for those who regarded the Social Sciences, including History of Religions, as an ideology or as a panacea for the world’s ills. The blows may be appropriate for devotees of Comte or Marx, but for those of us to whom history and sociology are simply and naively branches of scholarship, they miss the point. Another reason for mentioning the book in these pages is its title, reminiscent of Hansen’s *Changing Gods* (see above). Some readers and reviewers feel uncomfortable with too metaphoric titles. We hear a lot about the death of god(s), changing gods, returning gods etc. when the author really means the decline of, changes in, or revival of *human* beliefs in god(s) or in a concept of divinity. Sontag, as a philosopher, was evidently affected by Becker’s “message” to the point of feeling the urge to re-evaluate it.

Iconography

The publications of the Groningen University “Institute of Religious Iconography” have been mentioned in these pages more

than once. Fasc.xii.9 of the "Iconography of Religions" series is specially welcome,⁵¹ because it deals with a subject that usually falls betwixt and between: Korean Buddhist painting. Readers are urged to go to their shelves and compare how much they have on China and Japan, and how much on Korea. Hanging scrolls, framed paintings, and wall-paintings (illuminated mss. are omitted) depicting Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, patriarchs, dharma-protectors, spirits, the gods of the Great Dipper, the Hell Kings (my favourites)—this slim fascicle illustrates not only its subjects but also how little those of us who are no Koreanists really know. Unfortunately many misprints disfigure the text.

The contents of the series of companion volumes *Visible Religion* is, as always, varied, interesting, of unequal value and, by definition, a mixed bag. Vol. vi, *The Image in Writing*,⁵² ranges from Rome and Egypt and Mesopotamia to Peru, Mexico, the Indus Valley, Islam and much more. The article which should have been the most exciting (*Les Clefs de l'Écriture Chinoise*) turns out to be the oddest of all, even odder than the jolly old *clavis sinica* literature with which we had been blessed in the 17th and 18th centuries. But the open-minded reader will find much to stimulate him.

It is surely meet and befitting that this survey, and especially its iconography section, should end not with a whimper but with a bang. The bang is Prof. Anna Kartsonis' *Anastasis*,⁵³ without doubt one of the *opera magna* on religious iconography. The *anastasis* is surely one of the central themes of Byzantine art, but strangely enough has never received the attention it deserves. The history of the image begins after the 7th cent., and the author deals with her subject in a manner that sets new standards of scholarship and especially of method. Theology, political theory, church/state ideologies, Byzantine culture in general—there is hardly a source which the author does not exploit. To avoid misunderstandings to which the title may give rise: the book is not about the Resurrection but about what became no doubt the most popular though non-scriptural post-crucifixion, post-burial and pre-resurrection event, to wit Christ's spoliation of Hades. It is a subject looming large in literature and liturgy, long before becoming an iconographic theme. The amount of material (iconographic and textual) analysed by the author is simply staggering, and as an extra boon

to theology as well as the history of art she also draws the lines leading from the representation of the *anastasis* to that of the Last Judgment. The value of the book is not restricted to its being the definitive study of its subject; it also provides a model how this kind of research should be conducted.

Corrigendum

NUMEN XXXVII: 128 mentioned the *Cahiers d'Extrême-Orient*. Readers will undoubtedly have noticed the error: the name of this journal is *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie*; see also NUMEN XXXIII: 262.

R.J.Z. W.

¹ John A. Hutchinson, *Paths of Faith*, 3rd ed. (McGraw-Hill, New York), 1981, pp. 575, ISBN 0-07-031532-9.

² Mary Boyce, *Zoroastrians: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London), 1984, pp. 252, £7.95, ISBN 0-7102-0156-7.

³ R. Gombrich, *Theravada Buddhism: a social history from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London), 1988, pp. 237, £7.95, ISBN 0-71202-1319-0.

⁴ Paul Williams, *Mahayana Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations* (Routledge, London), 1989 pp. 317, £9.95, ISBN 0-415-02537-0.

⁵ M. Juergensmyer & N.G. Barrier (eds.), *Sikh Studies: Comparative Perspectives on a Changing Tradition* (Berkeley Religious Studies Series) 1979, pp. 230, \$16, ISBN 0-89581-1014, hardbound.

⁶ W.H. McLeod, *Sikhism* (Manchester, Manchester Univ. Press), 1984, pp. 166, £5.50, ISBN 0-7190-1076-4, softcover.

⁷ M. Boyce, *Zoroastrianism*, (Manchester, Manchester Univ. Press) 1984, pp. 166, £5.50, ISBN 0-7190-1091-8, softcover.

⁸ W. Doniger O'Flaherty, *Hinduism* (Manchester, Manchester Univ. Press), 1988, pp. 211, £8.95, ISBN 0-7190-1867-6, softcover.

⁹ Philip S. Alexander, *Judaism* (Manchester, Manchester Univ. Press) 1984, pp. 198, £5.95, softcover, ISBN 0-7190-1498-0.

¹⁰ Åke Hultrantz, *Belief and Worship in Native North America*, ed. Chr. Vecsey (Syracuse, Syracuse Univ. Press), 1981, pp. xxvii + 330, ISBN 0-8156-2248-1.

¹¹ Åke Hultrantz, *The Study of American Indian Religion*, ed. by C. Vecsey, (Scholars Press, Chico CA and Crossroads Publ., New York; A.A.R. Studies in Religion 21), 1983, pp. viii + 134, \$12.95.

¹² Al-Shahrastani, *Livre des Religions et des Sectes*, vol 1, traduction avec introduction par D. Gimaret et G. Monnot (Peeters/UNESCO, Leuven), 1986, pp. xxv + 727, ISBN 90-6831-065-8.

¹³ H-J Klimkeit (ed.), *Tod und Jenseits im Glauben der Völker* (Wiesbaden, O. Harrassowitz) 1978, pp. 200, ISBN 3-447-01948-4, softcover.

¹⁴ C.J. Johnson Ph.D. & M.G. McGee Ph.D. (eds.), *Encounters With Death: Religious Views of Death and Life After Death* (New York, Philosophical Library) 1986, pp. 352, hardcover ISBN 0-8022-2493-8; ISBN 0-8022-2508X.

¹⁵ G. Greshake (ed.), *Ungewisses Jenseits: Himmel — Hölle — Fegefeuer* (Düsseldorf, Patmos-paperback), 1986, pp. 94, ISBN 3-491-77645-7.

¹⁶ R. Friedli, *Zwischen Himmel und Hölle: Die Reinkarnation* (Universitätsverlag Feiburg, Schweiz) 1986, pp. 122, softcover, ISBN 3-7278-0361-4.

¹⁷ Akio Tsukimoto, *Untersuchungen zur Totenpflege (kispum) im alten Mesopotamien* (Butzon & Bercker, Kevelaer and Neukirchener Verlag, Neukirchen-Vluyn) 1985, pp. 260; vol. 216 in the series "Alter Orient und Altes Testament".

¹⁸ Klaas Spronk, *Beatific Afterlife in Ancient Israel and in the Ancient Near-East*, (same publishers as the preceding) 1986, pp. 398; vol. 219 in the aforementioned series.

¹⁹ Gay L. Ebersole, *Ritual Poetry and the Politics of Death in Early Japan* (Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press) 1989, pp. 338, \$35.—, ISBN 0-691-07338-4.

²⁰ James L. Watson & Evelyn S. Rawski, *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Berkeley, Univ. of California Press), 1988, pp. 334, \$42.50, ISBN 0-520-06081-4.

²¹ Antony Flew, *The Logic of Mortality* (Oxford, Blackwell), 1987, pp. 200, £22.50, ISBN 0-631-15628-3.

²² Paul & Linda Badham (eds.), *Death and Immortality in the Religions of the World* (New York, Paragon House; a "New ERA" book) 1987, pp. 238, \$12.95 (softcover), ISBN 0-913757-67-5.

²³ Xinriu Liu, *Ancient India and Ancient China: Trade and Religious Exchanges AD 1-600* New Delhi, Oxford Univ. Press), 1988, pp. xxi + 231, Rs.160, SBN 19-562050-X.

²⁴ J.L. Mehta, *India and the West: the problem of understanding* (Scholars Press, Chico CA), Studies in World Religions 4, 1985, pp. xvii + 268, cloth \$20.75, paper \$13.75.

²⁵ W. Halbfass, *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding* (Albany, SUNY Press), 1988, pp. xv + 604, paper \$19.95 cloth \$60.50.

²⁶ A. Strobel, *Das heilige Land der Montanisten: eine religionsgeographische Untersuchung* (Berlin/New York, de Gruyter), 1980, pp. 308 + 24 plates (= 48 pictures), vol. 37 in the RGV series, ISBN 3-11-008369-8.

²⁷ H. Busse & G. Kretschmar, *Jerusalem Heiligtumstraditionen in Altkirchlicher und Frühchristlicher Zeit* (Wiesbaden, O. Harassowitz) softcover, pp. 111 + several floorplans.

²⁸ Diana Eck, *Banaras: City of Light* (New York, A. Knopf, 1982, and London, Routledge & Kegan Paul), 1983, £14.95, pp. 427.

²⁹ Tor Andrae, *In the Garden of Myrtles: Studies in Early Islamic Mysticism*, transl. by Brigitta Sharpe, Foreword by Annemarie Schimmel, biographical introduction by Eric Sharpe (New York, SUNY Press), 1987, hardcover [ISBN 0-88706-523-6] and paperback, pp. xvi + 157.

³⁰ Abdul Malik Mujahid, *Conversion to Islam: Untouchables' Strategy for Protest in India* (Chambersburg PA, Anima Books), 1989, pp. 159 softcover.

³¹ Indira Visvanathan Peterson, *Poems to Siva: The Hymns of the Tamil Saints* (Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press), 1989, pp. xvi + 382, ISBN 0-691-06767-8.

³² Alf Hiltebeitel (ed.), *Criminal Gods and Demon Devotees: Essays on the Guardians of Popular Hinduism* (New York, SUNY Press), pp. xii + 491, hardcover [ISBN 0-88706-981-9] and pbk.

³³ H-J Klimkeit, *Hymnen und Gebete der Religion des Lichts: iranische und türkische liturgische Texte der Manichäer Zentralasiens* (Wiesbaden, Westdeutscher Verlag), 1989, pp. 280, DM 76.— ISBN 3-531-05096-6, softcover.

³⁴ Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, Steven Lukes (eds.), *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, History* (Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Press) 1st ed. 1985, 1987 reprint, pp. 309, softcover £10.95, ISBN 0-521-27757-4. Also in hardcover.

³⁵ Roger J. Corless, *The Vision of Buddhism* (New York, Paragon House), 1989, pp. 329, \$12.95, softcover, ISBN 1-55778-200-8.

³⁶ Hanna Havnevik, *Tibetan Buddhist Nuns: History, Cultural Norms and Social Reality* (Oxford, Oxford Univ. Press), 1990, pp. 251, £25.—, hardcover, ISBN 82-00-02846-1. [Norwegian Univ. Press: The Inst. for Comparative Research in Human Culture].

³⁷ Tadeusz Skorupski, *The Buddhist Heritage* (Tring, U.K., The Inst. of Buddhist Studies) 1989, [Buddhica Britannica: Series Continua i], pp. 276, hardcover, ISBN 0-9515424-00.

³⁸ *Asian Religious Studies Information* n. 4, July 1988 (1989), The Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions, Carmel, New York, ISSN 0889-5869, pp. 237.

³⁹ Julian F. Pas, *A Select Bibliography on Taoism*, 1988 (IASWR Bibliographical Monographs 1, same publisher as no. 38), pp. 52.

⁴⁰ William Y. Chen, *A Guide to Tao-Tsang Chi Yao*, 1987 (same publisher as no. 38).

⁴¹ Valerie Hansen, *Changing Gods in Medieval China 1127-1276* (Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press), 1990, pp. 256, ISBN 0-691-05559-9.

⁴² George T. Tanabe & Willa Jane Tanabe (eds.), *The Lotus Sutra in Japanese Culture* (Honolulu, Univ. of Hawaii Press), 1989, pp. 239, ISBN 0-8248-1198-4.

⁴³ Takamichi Takahatake, *Young Man Shinran: A Reappraisal of Shinran's Life* (Waterloo, ONT., Wilfrid Laurier Univ. Press), 1987, pp. 28, softcover, ISBN 0-88920-169-2.

⁴⁴ Stewart Guthrie, *A Japanese New Religion: Rissho Kosei-kai in a Village Hamlet* (Ann Arbor, Univ. of Michigan), 1988, pp. 245, hardcover, ISBN 0-939512-33-5.

⁴⁵ H. Byron Earhart, *Gedatsu-kai and Religion in Contemporary Japan* (Bloomington, Indiana Univ. Press), 1989, hardcover, \$57.50, ISBN 0-253-35007-7.

⁴⁶ Joseph M. Kitagawa, *On Understanding Japanese Religion* (Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press), 1987, pp. xxxi & 343, hardcover \$47.— ISBN 0-691-07313-9; \$14.95.

⁴⁷ Paul O. Ingram, *The Modern Buddhist-Christian Dialogue: Two Universal Religions in Transformation* (Lewiston N.Y., Edwin Mellen Press), pp. 441, \$39.95, ISBN 0-88946-490-1.

⁴⁸ Paul O. Ingram & Frederick J. Streng (eds.), *Buddhist-Christian Dialogue: Mutual Renewal and Transformation* (Honolulu, Univ. of Hawaii Press), 1986, pp. 248, softcover, ISBN 0-8248-0829-0.

⁴⁹ Notto R. Thelle, *Buddhism and Christianity in Japan: From Conflict to Dialogue, 1854-1899* (Honolulu, Univ. Of Hawaii Press) 1987, pp. 355, \$30.—, ISBN 0-8248-1006-6.

⁵⁰ Frederick Sontag, *The Return of the Gods: A Philosophical/Theological Reappraisal of the Writings of Ernest Becker* (New York/Bern, Peter Lang), 1989, pp. 142, hardcover, Sw.Fr.43.50, ISBN 0-8204-0909-X.

⁵¹ Hendrik Hjort Sorensen, *The Iconography of Korean Buddhist Painting, Iconography of Religions* xii.9 (Leiden, Brill), 1989, pp. 21 & 48 plates, softcover, ISBN 90-04-08940-3.

⁵² H.G. Kippenberg (ed.), *The Image in Writing*, vol.vi of the Annual of Religious Iconography VISIBLE RELIGION (Leiden, Brill) 1988, pp. 201, softcover, D.Fl.120.—, ISBN 90-04-08547-5.

⁵³ Anna D. Kartsonis, *Anastasis: The Making of an Image* (Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press), 1986, pp. 263 & 89 illustrations, 21 × 28 cm., \$51.50, ISBN 0-691-04039-7.

LEXIKON DES MITTELALTERS — II: JUDAISM. *Lexikon des Mittelalters*. Erster Band, 2110 col. (Oct.1977-Nov.1980): *Aachen-Bettelordenskirchen*. Zweiter Band, 2210 col. (May 1981-November 1983): *Bettlerwesen-Codex von Valencia*. Dritter Band, 2208 col. (May 1984-June 1986): *Codex Wintoniensis- Erziehungs- und Bildungswesen*. Vierter Band, Lief. 1-7 (1567 col.): *Erzkanzler-Goslar* (March 1987-December 1988) — München und Zürich, Artemis Verlag.

The *Lexikon des Mittelalters* (hereafter:LM) aims at covering all aspects of the history of the European Middle Ages, viz. the period between A.D. 300 and 1500. It has already been illustrated in a previous review that LM, though primarily a reference-work for students of European medieval history, can be of great use to islamicists as well, in view of the high standard of the articles related, in one way or another, to Islam (*Numen* vol XXX, pp. 265-268). The present review aims at presenting an evaluation of the contributions of LM in the field of Jewish studies. At this point it should be stressed that the editorial preface of November 1980 stated: "Ebenso ist die Geschichte des mittelalterlichen europäischen Judentums *fester Bestandteil* des Lexikons" (my italics, VK).

In the volumes covering the letters A through G I have counted a total number of some 90 articles on Jewish subjects. This number has to be considered as an approximate one only, as I most likely have overlooked several items going through the enormous mass of articles published thus far. Nevertheless, it is my contention that the articles which I have seen faithfully reflect the way Jewish themes are dealt with in LM.

Taking into account the number of articles on Islamic subjects to be found in volume 1 and the first 4 fascicles of volume 2—some 185 items—one is allowed to conclude that LM pays some 7 to 8 items more attention to Islamic than to Jewish subjects. It is of course hard, if not completely impossible, to express arithmetically, in terms of numbers of articles, the relative importance of Islam and Judaism for the history of medieval Europe. No doubt the Islamic world exercised major military, economical and cultural influences on medieval Christian Europe. Judaism, however, had struck root all over Europe itself and the medieval history of the European Jewish communities, quite obviously, is an intrinsic part of European history at large. In this perspective one is perhaps allowed to remark that the number of articles devoted by LM to Jewish subjects is a com-

paratively modest one. Several Jewish personalities of medieval Europe to whom the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (hereafter: EJ) has devoted articles of 2 columns or even more and who are not dealt with in LM in separate articles, could have been given a few separate lines in LM. Confining ourselves to the letter A we can mention as some examples: (1) *Abraham* ben David of Posquières (Provence, c.1125-1198), known as Rabad (i.e. Rabbi Abraham ben David); (2) *Abulafia* Meir (1170?-1244), the most renowned Spanish rabbi of the first half of the 13th century; (3) *Adret*, Solomon ben Abraham (c.1235-c.1310), Spanish rabbi and one of the foremost Jewish scholars of his day; (4) *Albo*, Joseph (15th c.), a Spanish scholar who took part in the Disputation at Tortosa.

Of the ca. 90 articles I counted, the majority (51) was written by a nucleus of six specialists in Jewish studies who are teaching in Cologne and Hamburg.

P. Freimark (Hamburg), who is the editor of the "Hamburger Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Juden", has contributed at least 5 articles. Three of these (*Ahasverus*, *Apostasie* and *Chronologie*) can be considered to be little more than compilations of corresponding articles of EJ. This remark is not intended to be a kind of reproach of the author, but merely to underline the persisting dominance of EJ in the field. This can be observed in some of the articles of the other authors as well. In his remaining two articles (*Bad* and *Beschneidung*) references to the wealth of information to be found in EJ (s.v. *ablution*, *bath*, *mikveh* and *circumcision*) would have been appropriate as well.

H. Greive (Cologne), who is the author of several well-known books on Jewish neoplatonism and on the religious philosophy of Abraham ibn Ezra, contributed at least 10 articles. Four of these (*Abraham* ben David; *Abulafia*, Aben Samuel; *Bâhîr*; *Erziehung*- written in cooperation with H.G. von Mutius) are little more than abstracts of EJ-articles. The other articles have been enriched considerably by the author's thorough knowledge of the history of Jewish philosophy and science (*Astrologie*, *Aristoteles*, *Brunnenvergiftung*, *Abraham* ben Meir ibn Ezra, *Averroes* and *Crescas*, Hasday).

J. Maier (Cologne) who wrote a "Geschichte der jüdischen Religion" and who authored several studies on a wide range of Jewish subjects (i.a. on the image of Jesus in talmudic writings and on the Dead Sea Scrolls), contributed at least 12 articles. Five of these (*Abraham* bar Hiyya, *Bahja* ben Paquda, *Bann*, *Benjamin* b. Jona von Tudela and *Donnolo*, Sabbataj) are little more than extracts of EJ-articles. The other articles also contain more or less the same facts as the EJ-articles but they have occasionally been enriched with new bibliographical references and with some lucid historical observations. Thus, in the articles *Apologetik* and *Askese* Maier draws general and abstract lines of historical development, whereas EJ

deals with the same subject in a much more detailed manner by discussing the important personalities who played a rôle in these fields. In some cases the compactness of Maier's articles has caused some opacity, as e.g. in *Dämonen/Dämonologie*. Strangely enough the birth-year of Sabbataj Donnolo is given by Maier as 903, whereas EJ, *The Jewish Encyclopaedia* and the *Jüdisches Lexikon* all give 913. The remaining articles of this author are *Aberglaube*; *Abravanel*, A. Isaak (ben Jehuda); *Abravanel*, Jehuda (written in cooperation with O. Besomi): *Allegorie*; *Armut und Armenfürsorge*.

H.G. von Mutius (Cologne) who has published several studies on medieval rabbinical literature and the history of Christian-Jewish relations in the Middle Ages, has contributed at least 14 articles. Among these there figure several subjects which are of great importance to the student of comparative religion, as e.g. *Begräbnis*, *Bibel* (a very valuable article, divided into I. "Gestalt", II. "Gebrauch", III. "Bibelhandschriften", IV. "Bibelkommentare", V. "Bibelkritik"), *Buchstabensymbolik*, *Ehe*, *Feste*, *Fleisch/Fleischer* and *Gebet*. Von Mutius's articles stand out for their systematic composition and clearness of style, even though some of them are little more than abstracts of EJ-materials. His remaining articles are: *Delmedigo*, *Eleasar von Worms*, *Geschichte der Juden in England* (I: Äussere Lebensbedingungen im Rahmen der christlichen Umwelt"; II: "Inneres Leben"), *Gerschom ben Jehuda*, *Gikatilla* (Joseph) and *Gikatilla* (Moses).

P. Schäfer (Cologne), who has published various studies on rabbinical literature and theology—he has also compiled a "Kleines Lexikon des Judentums" in cooperation with J. Maier—has contributed, as far as I could see, at least 3 articles. Two of these (*Alfasi*, Isaak b. Jakob and *Ascher ben Jehiel*) are merely compilations of EJ-materials. The other article is *Adam*.

J. Wachten (Cologne), who is known as the author of some studies on the Midrash, has contributed at least 6 articles. Three of these (*Bettlerwesen*, *Briefl/Briefliteratur/Briefsammlungen* and *Chronik*) are little more than EJ-abstracts. New information and views differing from those expressed in EJ are to be found in his articles *Arbeit*, *Cavalleria* (Jehuda de la), and *Denunziation*.

The materials contributed to the *Lexikon des Mittelalters* in the field of Jewish studies no doubt are of great use to the general European medievalist, even though they are not complete. However, whosoever is in need of a more profound and a more specialized orientation on medieval European Jewish themes, has to consult the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*.

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P.Sj. VAN KONINGSVELD

HAJJAR, Y. *La triade d'Héliopolis-Baalbek, iconographie, théologie culte et sanctuaires* — Montréal, 1985, pp. 423, planches xiii.

The scholarly world, especially those rare souls interested in the religions of the Levant and their spread in the Roman period, are in debt to Prof. Youssef Hajjar, of the Université de Montréal, for the volume, in two parts, that he published in 1977 on *La triade d'Héliopolis-Baalbek* as vol. 51 of the series *Etudes préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain*. This thoroughgoing work presented the iconographic and epigraphic documents (418 pp.), the literary texts (about 40 pp.) and also a corpus called 'monuments non- héliopolitains'. This was followed by a discussion of the cult of the Heliopolitan triad and its diffusion in the Roman empire. Beside detailed indices and concordances, the reader was given 128 plates of epigraphic and iconographic material for study. The premise stated in the title, that there was a Heliopolitan triad set the format of the book. This triad consisted of Jupiter, Venus and Mercury. The author uses the Roman designations for these gods, rather than the earlier Aramaic or Greek, since they appear in the epigraphic material only in Roman form. The existence of this triad has been doubted by many scholars. There can be no doubt about the divine pair Jupiter and Venus, coming in place of Zeus and Aphrodite, and eventually in place of Hadad and Atargatis. They are found in the West Semitic arena in various guises, but Mercury—that is Hermes and before him in all likelihood Nabu (Biblical Nebo)—as a third member of the group is extremely doubtful. The divine pair appear together at some sites, and at others complement each other, that is, at Heliopolis-Mabbug, they both appear on coins of the same series. Some mythographers, both ancient and modern, tried to place a younger god in the picture and at times also made him the son of the pair under discussion. Thus some scholars in a sort of search for an early trinity have proposed for Tyre the triad Ba'alshamem, Ashtart and Melqart, or for Sidon the triad Ba'alshamem, Ashtart and Eshmun. This endeavour has been brought down into the hellenistic and Roman periods. Suffice it to say that there is no evidence for this; indeed the legends that would have the younger god romantically attached to his supposed mother vitiates against this sort of reasoning. The only triad about which there can be no argument is that of Hatra—in which the gods are called: *mārān* "our lord", *mārātān* "our lady" and *bar mārān* "son of our lord".

This is not to assert that these three gods do not appear together in inscriptions. Thus in the often discussed Latin inscription CIL III, 138 and 14385b from Heliopolis-Baalbek, which figures as nos. 2, 3 in Hajjar's corpus (pp. 7-12) the three gods (after proper restoration) are named

together and the same is true of other inscriptions, but there is no affiliation provided for them. The same is true for the iconographic representations. Although one may admit that there are at least two items in the corpus that present the three gods together: the Antioch altar (no. 170, pl. lxiv—but note that there is a fourth icon) and the plaque found in Roman on the Palatine hill (no. 293, pl. cxiv); Hajjar finds other representations of the triad in his iconographic material, but a bit of scepticism is in order. The Heliopolitan Jove was popular in Rome and throughout the Roman empire in the West as is abundantly clear from Hajjar's valuable corpus, and the other Heliopolitan gods were also revered, but this does not as yet make for a plausible triad.

All of the above is a sort of preface to the proper review of Prof. Hajjar's more recent work. He has taken the results of the research recorded in the earlier work as a given. Although he did enter into discussion of some matters of substance in that volume, he uses his second book as a means of locating the gods of Heliopolis and their cult in both spatial and temporal dimensions. He also engages in a comparative study of these deities, using primarily Syro-Phoenician material, but with attention to Anatolian, Mesopotamian and Egyptian comparative phenomena. The first part (pp. 19-174) deals with the iconography of the 'Heliopolitan triad' with Jupiter Heliopolitanus, to use the author's terminology, taking pride of place with over 114 pages, while the other members of the triad get only about 20 pages each. The justification for this imbalance lies in the fact, ascertained by an examination of the Corpus in the earlier volume, that the formula I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) H(elipolitano) was the dominant dedication in these inscriptions.

There can be no doubt that the author has spread his net widely and has read broadly. The text and footnotes present a sort of omnium gatherum of a good part of the material that has been written on the topics discussed. Thus, since the socle of many of the images of Jupiter Heliopolitanus consists of two young bulls, there is under 'taureaux' (pp. 37-61) a detailed discussion of the use of animals as the base of a divine statue, and as such the discussion is indeed useful. However, a critical reading shows that much of assembled material is indeed irrelevant. The same is true in the discussion of Venus Heliopolitana's 'animaux-attributs' (pp. 143-146) and 'coiffure et costumes' (pp. 146-152). I find that items that belong to essentially different categories are juxtaposed. If the author felt constrained to bring all of this comparative material, he should have then attempted to sort it out. For example, the comparison of the *kalathos* worn by Venus Heliopolitana (the local Atargatis, and by all the Atargatis-like goddesses in the arena) and the head-dress of Ishtar on Mesopotamian terra cotta figurines is particularly jarring. The discus-

sion of the veil, covering the head, on many figurines, busts and statues, is useful (pp. 147-148). The veil was actually part of the normal head-dress of the matron in this period and the divine in many ways simply mirrored the human. The accompanying discussion of the veil in ancient Mesopotamia, Ugarit and the Bible is meaningless for the cultural dimension was much different. The author's handling of the early periods is not as sure as his treatment of later periods.

The chapters that deal with 'théologie et culte' have the same quality. Under headings such as: *Prétendue nature solaire du dieu*; *Dieu de l'orage, de la pluie et des sources*; *Dieu de fertilité*; *Dieu supreme et cosmique*; *Dieu éternel*; *Dieu oraculaire*; *Dieu saint*; *Dieu bienveillant, sauveur et victorieux* aspects of Jupiter Heliopolitanus are discussed, with a great deal of material collected and treated in a rather uncritical manner. Indeed, were it the author's intent to give us a sort of itemized list of powers and potentates among the Near Eastern deities of various periods using the gods of the 'triad' as his focal point one might applaud his endeavour, but as a commentary on these particular gods and on the inscriptions in which the terms appear it is not particularly successful. The same sort of treatment is meted out to Venus Heliopolitana, but Mercury has a minor role and is thus spared since Hajjar has not been able to place him in a Near Eastern context.

The chapter on 'le culte de la triade héliopolitaine' (257-80) is of interest. We cannot know what actually happened in the temples for descriptive texts are lacking and the author is very much aware of this. Since we have no hymns or prayers, no regulations or prescriptions, no real description of rites and ceremonies he has undertaken a close interpretation of the epigraphic material. It is a worthy enterprise, even though the overly wide choice of parallels vitiates some of the results.

It is in the discussion of 'Les temples héliopolitains' (pp. 281-369) that the author seems to be at home. He offers a detailed description of the main sanctuary, dedicated to Jupiter, and of the other temples of that city. Part of the chapter is dedicated to the other Heliopolitan temples of Syria and Phoenicia, and there is a section dealing with the temples in Panonia and in Italy. There is an appendix offering a supplement to the Corpus of iconographic and epigraphic documents of the earlier volume. This is accompanied by twelve plates. A second appendix deals with paganism and Christianity at Baalbek and a detailed general index adds to the volume's usefulness.

In this volume Prof. Hajjar has given us another important work on Heliopolis and its gods. If one cannot accept his basic premise, and is critical of the way in which material is presented in the book, he must still

acknowledge its importance for all students of Near Eastern religions during the Roman period.

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JONAS C. GREENFIELD

GREEN, Henry A., *The Economic and Social Origins of Gnosticism*, SBL Dissertation Series 77 — Atlanta, Georgia, Scholars Press, 1985.

This is a very useful book. In spite of the specific point of view adapted by the author and reflected in the title, the book may serve as a general introduction to the study and understanding of Gnosticism. Green tries to substantiate the theory that structural similarities between the metaphysical doctrines and everyday experience exist in the Gnostic writings, and also examines the extent to which the Gnostic ideology can be shown as being rooted in historical reality and reflecting the material conditions of life.

Green begins his discussion with a survey of the problems involved in "Sociology and Theology", in which geographical, economic and social considerations play a decisive role. His thesis branches off in two directions: (1) The "transformation in the Ptolemaic mode of production towards privatization [which] was structurally related to the ideology of individualism embodied in Gnosticism", and (2) the fact "that certain Jews in Egypt, experiencing this change in the mode of production, acted as catalysts in the sectarian development of Judaism and hence played a pivotal role in the emergence of Gnosticism". (pp. 18-19).

What the reviewer finds particularly attractive about Green's book is the fact that Judaism and Jewish ways of life, particularly as experienced in the so-called Diaspora, are seriously considered as the ideological and sociological fountainhead from which several of the Gnostic streams drew their waters. Although scholars are conscious of the fact that the role of Judaism cannot be ignored in the discussion of the origins of Gnosticism, few—and Green is certainly one of them—would centre their discussion on the decisive Jewish contribution to the formation of Gnosticism. It is, however, a question of a different order whether everything that Green assumes with regard to Diaspora Judaism can really be as satisfactorily documented as he believes it can.

Green's is a well-informed thesis, and shows mature judgement in assessing the scholarly work of others. It still needs a more thoroughgoing discussion of the Gnostic texts in question, and a more independent approach to the materials and problems in question.

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ITHAMAR GRUENWALD

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OBITUARY

Yanagawa Keiichi (1926-1990)

The premature death on 3 April, 1990, at the age of 63, of Yanagawa Keiichi, professor at the Shinto affiliated Kokugakuin University in Tokyo, came as a shock to the world of religious studies in Japan and to the many scholars in other countries who have met him, whether in Japan or abroad, and have been impressed not only by his academic proficiency but also by his richly warm human personality.

A graduate from the Department of Religious Studies of Tokyo University, Professor Yanagawa passed twenty-five years as a professor, and later Chairman, of the said department at his Alma Mater. In that capacity—and from 1980 to 1982 also as President of the Japanese Association of Religious Studies—he was a kind of foster-father to a whole generation of scholars who, in his footsteps, learned to look at “the science of religion as a science of human beings,” as he himself used to stress, and to further enrich their knowledge of Japan’s rich yet complicated religious heritage, harmonizing field research and theoretical study in the way he did. After his retirement from Tokyo University in 1986, Professor Yanagawa took up a new career at Kokugakuin University and continued serving on the boards of various academic organizations inside and outside Japan, although his precarious health increasingly prevented him from traveling far.

It was only in recent years—and then still under pressure and help from colleagues and former students—that two independent volumes of his writings were published. Typically of his “inclination of a short-story teller,” as he himself often jokingly referred to, writing longer pieces was not his forte. Yet, the immense amount of articles and other short writings he produced constituted a kind of barometer of what was alive in the field of religious studies in Japan and, in their own way, served as a guide-board for further research. Only a few of them have been translated into English. But all foreign scholars who have come into contact with the Japanese world of religious studies, even those who never personally met with him, have certainly benefited from his study and its insights. For his dedication to his work, based on the axis of deep human relationships, has been one of the main sources of inspiration to many, if not most, students presently engaged in our discipline and, in this sense, reached out far beyond what he himself might have been aware of. For this we feel grateful and we honor his memory.

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JAN SWYNGEDOUW

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R E M I N D E R

Authors and publishers are
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